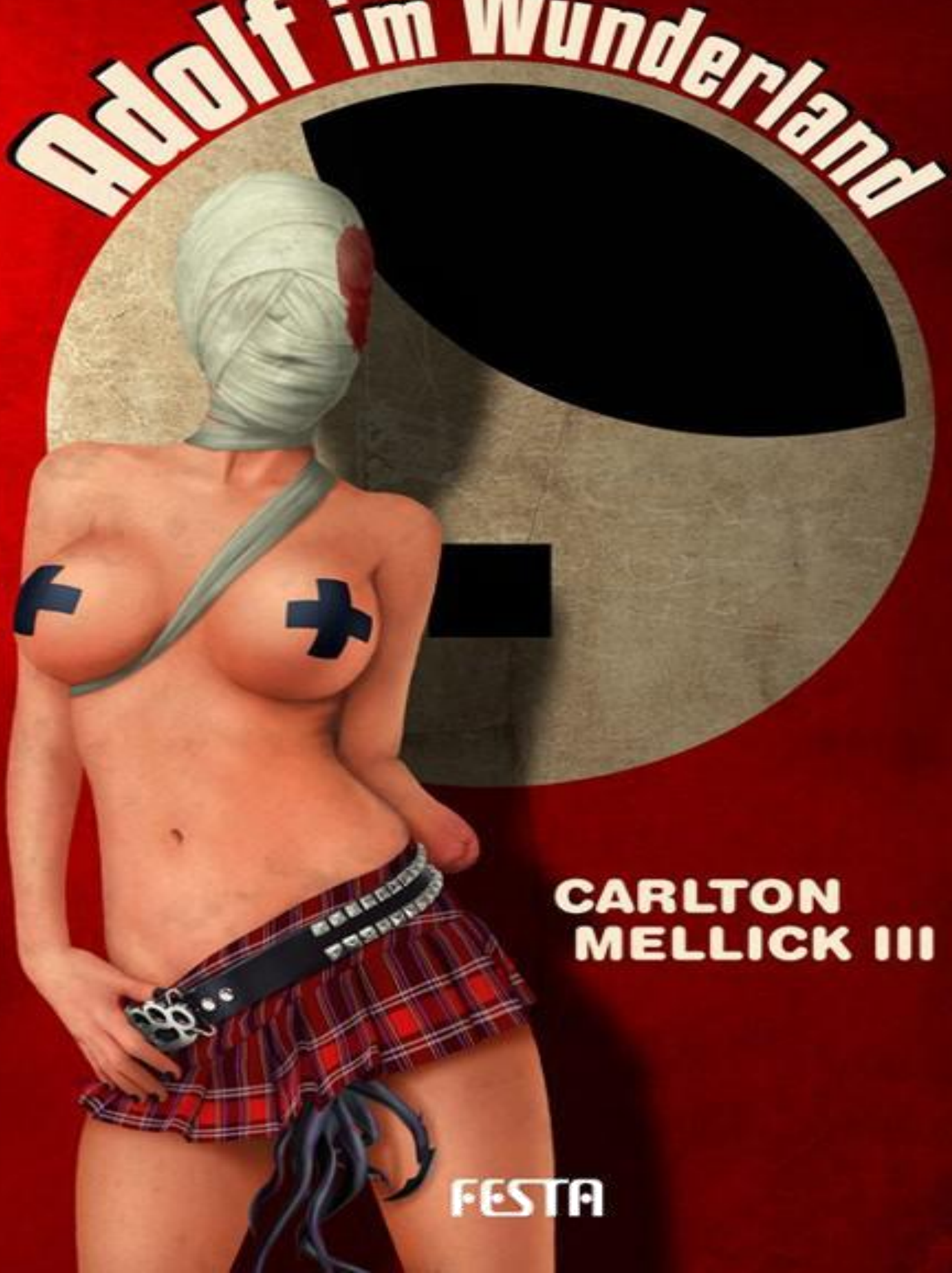
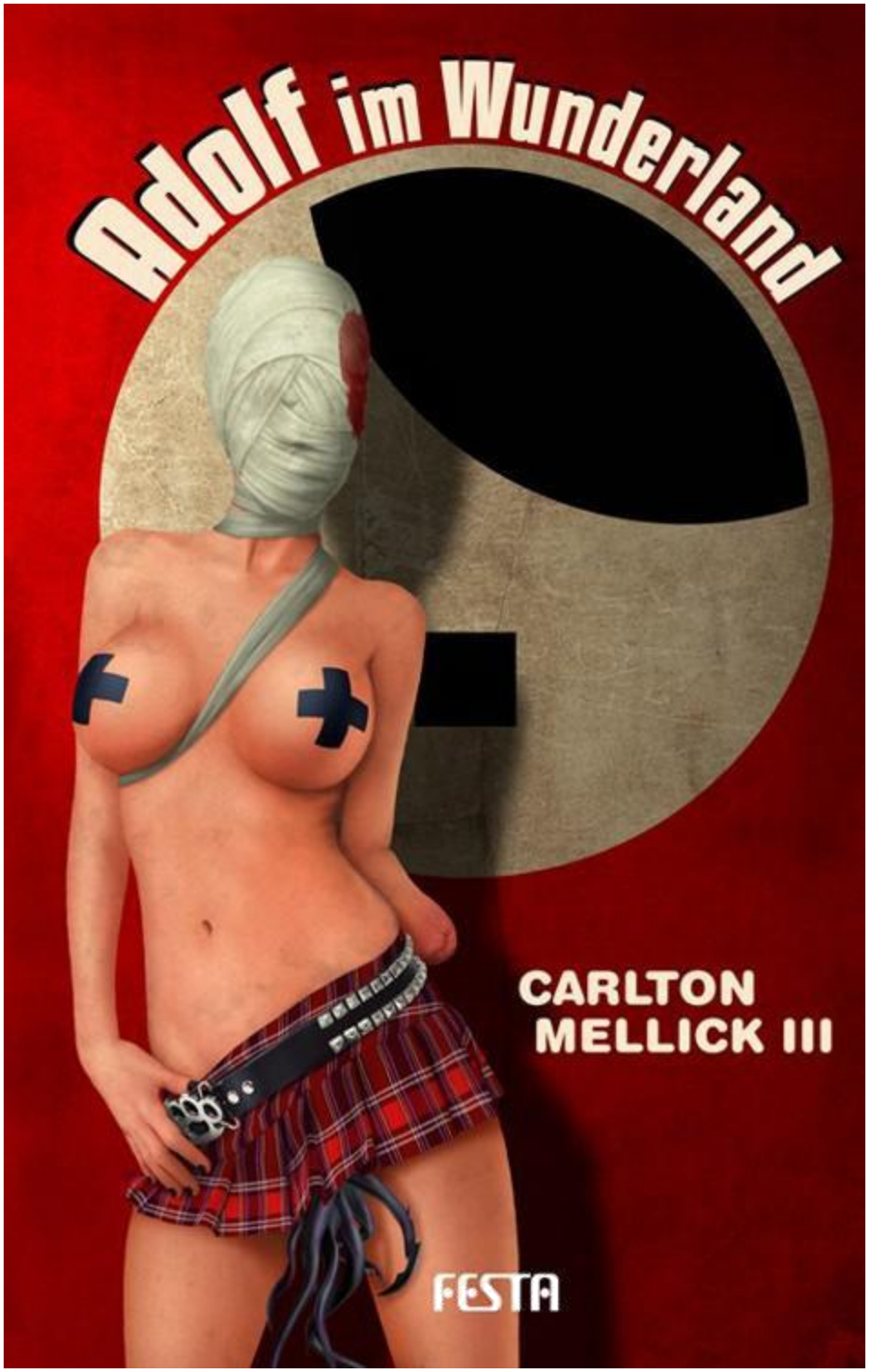
Adolf im Wunderland



CARLTON MELLICK III

FESTA


Adolf im Wunderland
CARLTON
MELLICK III
FESTA

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From the American by Christian Jentzsch

FESTA

»The more emphasis is placed on perfection,
the further she withdraws.”
– *Haridas Chaudhuri*

AUTHOR'S NOTE

For some reason I've always had an interest in Nazi-era Germany. Maybe it's because of my heritage: I'm descended from both German Nazis and German Jews. I once had a friend who thought it was romantic that my mother's family tree was partly responsible for wiping out so much of my father's family tree. Of course, I don't think that's how it happened. Actually I don't know much about this part of my family history. A great deal of this history has not been recorded for posterity, most of it intentionally.

Luckily my grandfather, who was born Carlton von Opperman, was not in Germany during the Holocaust because the Mellick family in America adopted him before the Second World War. We assume that my great-grandfather and his family were not so lucky because they were never heard from again.

My mother, Elke Beetz-Wittenborn, was born in Germany and moved to this country as a child in the early 1950s. Because Germans were still very unpopular in the United States at this time, they were met with a great deal of prejudice, especially my mother, who was constantly bullied by her teachers (encouraging her classmates to do the same). Her family carried an incredible sense of guilt about her German origins and largely denied her ancestry, so I actually don't know much about my German ancestors. There are rumors that the Wittenborn side saved a Jewish family by hiding them in their attic. Other rumors say there is a Gestapo man on the

Beetz side of my family as well as several Nazi supporters. I will probably never know the truth.

My interest in Nazi-era Germany made me want to write a book about Nazi utopia. But instead of locating the book in this Nazi utopia, I decided to take Nazis out of this environment and send them to a surreal world like Wonderland. Wonderland represents chaos, randomness, disorder, the uncontrolled, the imperfect. The Nazi utopia stands for the exact opposite. For efficiency, purity, order, control, perfection. These are two worlds that can't help but collide, and that's exactly what happens when Adolf embarks on his journey to Wonderland.

It took me eight years to complete *Young Adolf Hitler* , which is the original title of this book. Aside from the eleven novels I discarded before *The Baby Jesus Anal Plug , Young Adolf Hitler* is fourth book I've started and 20th I've finished (book number three is still awaiting completion).

The pursuit of perfection has delayed the process of creating this book, which sounds rather ironic considering the subject of the story.

– Carlton Mellick III, 2008

PART ONE:

In pursuit of the white man

Rabbits

Blood Red Sky

The color red infested the landscape and the red smothered the yellow in the sun in the sky.

Two almost identical looking men were trudging through the scorching desert. They could feel the acidic HEAT liquefying the skin beneath their uniform, weeping from pores and blisters, while steam crawled over it like gauze spiders and beneath the suffocatingly tight collar, the blood vessels in their necks bulged to breathe. They sweat from the inside as well as from the outside. The salty wetness ran from the neck down the shoulders into the sleeves to the white ribbons around the upper left arm and darkened the red of the swastikas on them, staining them as bloody as the sky.

"She should be just over the next hill," the older said to the younger, staring at him with piercing eyes.

"You said that before the last hill and the one before that," the younger one said, pointing out that the dust in the wind had lodged in his partner's blond hair, giving it a brownish tint that he found absolutely disgusting and shameful.

"What are you implying?" the older man asked, frowning.

The younger didn't answer, but turned his head to watch a flock of centipedes fly by in the distance. *Incompetent old fool,* he said to himself.

The train had dropped them off in the middle of nowhere. At the station they found themselves alone as no one else had gotten off the train and they had stared at each other and then at the barren landscape and then at each other again as the train departed.

The station has not been used for a long time. It consisted of four buildings, each with two doors and four walls, but no roof or floor.

Prickly weeds had infested the buildings, and mounds of tractor tires were cloaked in crumbling flowers painted purple and pink.

They had been instructed to follow the road west, but there were no roads. Also no signs that could tell them where they were or where they were going. It was as if they were the first passengers to disembark at this station in over 100 years.

There was, however, a narrow trail that might once have been a path. So they followed him west to the hills in the distance, where they hoped to find the town they were looking for.

"That's five miles now," said the younger man, whose eyes had changed from sea blue to sun-red.

As they scaled the hill, the sun dripped their blood onto the horizon while sweat dripped into their eyes to sting and blind them.

"It only feels like five miles because of the heat," the older man explained. "Probably only two, three at *most ."*

They thought about it: *Eight kilometers? No, there were definitely not that many. When did we leave the train station? In the morning. The sun was in the east. Now she is in the west. Have we been walking all day? The heat is playing tricks on us. We must have gotten to the train station after 12pm and just didn't notice. It's only been an hour...two at most...*

The swarm of centipedes was still buzzing about eagerly, floating in the distance like a tornado. Maybe they were scorpion flies. Possibly some of them were on the back of their necks

landed and injected poison into their brains, making their train of thought stutter and falter.

At the top of the hill they found just another stretch of desert, stretching to a mountain range in the distance. There were also purple bushes and cacti that seemed carved out of steel. The sky reflected off the sand looked bright red like a Martian landscape. No sign of a city or any living thing. Silent like a painting.

"There's no town here," said the younger man, sending a smugly mean look in his superior's direction.

'She's here somewhere. We just have to find her.«

The younger man didn't seem so optimistic. The sardonic expression returned to his face and he shook his head without bothering to answer. He wanted his boss to be wrong. He wanted to inform the office of its inefficiency so that the older man would be executed and the younger man promoted to his post.

SS officers were always executed by firing squad rather than an injection because it was considered a more honorable way of dying. They were allowed to have their closest friends and acquaintances perform the execution, all lined up in front of them. If the younger man had his way, he would be in the older man's firing squad. He would have found it immensely satisfying to put a bullet in his superior's head.

"If the city wasn't in the middle of nowhere," the older officer explained, "he wouldn't be hiding there."

"Completely cut off from the rest of the world..." the young officer muttered to himself as he

trotted down the slope.

"Yes, people here are *free* to do whatever they want."

"Impossible," the young man shouted. "It's illegal."

The older man agreed. "It's *despicably* illegal."

"Then why hasn't anyone put a stop to this activity?"

"Don't ask me that." The older man shrugged wearily. "Ask the Fuhrer that."

The younger one snapped his gaze back down the path and continued, “How is our society supposed to achieve absolute *perfection* when whole cities are crammed into it revoke?"

"It's just a place," said the senior officer. »A whole world of stability will soon bury this place of arbitrariness. Let evolution do its job and eliminate the weak.”

"It's still a disgusting thought."

They staggered on down the path halfway to the mountains, stiff-legged from either an hour, two, or a day's march. A strong wind blew between the hilltops, ruffling her dusty blond hair. Dirt crunched between the younger man's eyelids as he squeezed them shut. He raised his briefcase to protect himself from the wind.

They reached the end of the dirt track. The younger man paused to blink sand out of his eyes until he could see the rest of the trail more clearly.

"What's that?" the younger officer asked, pointing to something far away.

The older man wiped the wind from his face and took a closer look. Then he saw it:

A city.

They marched through the desert until they reached their frontier.

It wasn't *really a* city, more like what a puppet would consider a town. About as high as her waist and about ten meters wide and 15 meters long.

"What do you think that is?" the younger man asked, taking a step into the miniature city and crunching his foot onto the gray foam road. Beside him stretched a row of cardboard houses spray-painted white, red, and tan.

"It's a kind of model," said the older one, who was waiting at the edge. "Probably a replica of the city we're looking for."

The younger officer seemed disappointed, although this model proved that civilization must be nearby.

"One of the local kids must have made them," he said.

"Excellent craftsmanship for a child."

The younger man shook his head. "I find it scary." He took a few more steps down the small street, crushing cardboard and uprooting trees along the side of the road.

"The city must be very close by," said the older man.

The younger officer knelt in front of a miniature inn in the center and peered in with his monstrous eye. All white and empty. Tables and chairs were missing, as was a counter and a bartender. "The kid didn't pay much attention to detail," he said.

The younger man turned to his superior officer, but he was no longer there.

"Where..." he called.

Silence.

His eyes twitched as they scanned the area, but the older officer was nowhere to be seen. At first he believed

In view of the embarrassing situation, his partner simply fled the dust – two influential officers who got lost in the desert, people were happy to withdraw from such a situation. But the older man couldn't possibly have run fast enough to completely disappear from view. And there was no suitable place to hide either. The older man was just *gone,* like he had disappeared from the face of the earth.

The SS officer left the model behind to look for his mate, sending his eyes wandering across the red desert, refusing to accept the concept of an inexplicable disappearance.

"That's absurd, he must be around here somewhere," he murmured, standing pitifully beside the miniature city as the dirty wind returned from the mountains.

Mr host

The rather young man woke up in a new place. A dark place.
Pressure pounded through his head
Eyeballs out - typical hangover headache, like he's had way too many booze the night before. A thick layer of bitterness in the mouth, insect bitter. As he ran his rough tongue over the furry carpet texture of his palate, he gagged.

His eyes opened on his hands, which in turn opened on a wooden table. Looking beyond the dirty fingers, he noticed a beer stain like piss on his chest. His uniform was soiled, wrinkled and soaked. The swastika on the shoulder looked faded under a layer of dust. He didn't know why his uniform was in such a condition. He didn't know where he was or how long he had been here.

He looked up.
He was sitting in a tavern. The landlord stood behind the counter and stared at him. The man looked... hollowed out. Wooden and immovable. His facial expression was reminiscent of a doll.

Otherwise nobody was there. Only the host. He didn't move and just stood there like a puppet made out of crumpled newspaper.
"How did I get here?" the younger man asked the innkeeper. He slurred the words and sounded rather drunk.
The landlord didn't answer. "How
long have I been here?"
The innkeeper shook his head in reply, but didn't say a word.

“Is this _____house?” the younger man asked.
Another blank look in response.

The younger man swiveled on his groaning stool. The taproom was as empty as the innkeeper. A few tables. No guests.

"Where is everyone?"

He got up from his stool and nearly lost his balance. His brain felt like a wet sponge, his knees were as soft as clay and his gait was correspondingly unsteady.

"In bed," said the landlord, making his guest wince in surprise at hearing him speak. The innkeeper's voice was as stiff as his appearance. "Everyone is in bed asleep by this time." The younger man clutched his forehead, trying to remember what he was doing there. The alcohol seemed to be the memory of his brain

to have damaged.

He thought to himself: *I must be in _____hausen, yes. I know that I should be there and have orders to find someone. Or should I kill him? Take him somewhere... but who?*

"Adolf?" asked the innkeeper, whose voice was paralyzed by the emptiness. "Anything else to drink?"

The younger man shook his terrified head, still trying to make sense of the situation. Then he thought: *wait a minute...*

"Adolf?" he literally fumed the words at the innkeeper. "Did you just call me Adolf?"

The innkeeper nodded his cardboard head. "Isn't that your name...Adolf Hitler?"

"No, my name is ..."

A long break. He bit his tongue, digging and digging in the fleshy drawers of his brain for answers.

"Look," said the landlord, pointing across the counter. "It's right there, on your uniform."

They looked together at the patch on his uniform and read the words there:

... God be praised

... Praise be to the nation

... Praise be to *Adolf Hitler*

"Adolf Hitler?" the younger man asked. "It sounds very familiar, but I'm fairly certain it's not my name..."

"But it must be you," said the innkeeper. "You even have a *little Hitler beard* ."

"What's a Hitler mustache?" the man asked, feeling his face where he found a strip of hair under his nose. "How do you know it's one?"

“I've never heard of Adolf Hitler as a person, but I know everything about Hitler's mustache. My own son wore one when he was a teenager.”

"If I'm Adolf Hitler, why name a beard fashion after someone like me? I'm much too young for that.«

"You must be older than you look," said the innkeeper. "But I don't *feel* old at all."

"You must be older than you feel," said the innkeeper.

The younger man tried to think again... *The assignment. My job is to track someone down, but who?*

He searched his pockets... *There must be a picture or a notebook or notes somewhere that will help me.* He turned his sandy pockets inside out. There was nothing.

"Is there a problem, Adolf?" the innkeeper asked.

"Don't call me Adolf," the younger man asked, searching his pockets again. He was sweating profusely.

Then he remembered...

"Briefcase," he said.

The innkeeper raised his eyebrows. "I had a briefcase, where is it?" "I didn't see a briefcase." "I had a..."

The younger man looked frantically around the common room, but couldn't find the briefcase anywhere. The only link to his assignment was missing... but something else he couldn't remember seemed to be missing. After an intense search, he stumbled across a memory. It flashed in his head as if a strip of tape had lain across his brain and had just been ripped off to reveal the memory with exploding pain.

"My partner?" he shouted. His voice reverberated like stale mineral water. He turned to the innkeeper. 'Have you seen another man dressed like me? A slightly older man in a uniform like this?”

The innkeeper shook his head. "I've never seen a uniform like this in my life."

“We marched across the desert… Then he disappeared. He just vanished into thin air.”

"So he just vanished?" "Yes, he just vanished."

The innkeeper looked sideways and his neck shifted like a piece of cloth. "Hmm." He nodded and grunted, frowning. "A Dakar spider must have gotten him."

“A… *what?* «

“A Dakar spider. This is a small animal with the ability to change the mass of its prey. It can shrink anything from the size of an elephant to the size of a dime, making any opponent the perfect victim. Your friend probably stood next to one, which then shrunk him to helpless size

and captured him before he even knew what was happening to him."

"You're not going to tell me my partner got eaten by a little spider."

"This kind of thing happens all the time."

The younger man just shook his head, his nerves rattling. The notion didn't seem scientifically plausible to him, but if such an absurd creature actually existed, it could explain his partner's disappearance.

"All right, have you seen another man?" he asked the innkeeper. "An imperfect man?"

"Imperfect? In what way?"

"I do not know exactly. I can't remember his face, but he's imperfect. It is a plague and I am here to rid society of it."

"No," replied the innkeeper. »I didn't see any person/disease walking around. You should try Frau Adrett. She knows everything that goes on in this town. You'll find them in the bakery in the morning."

"Where's the bakery?"

'You'll find her. Everything is easy to find in this city. And if you don't find it, it will find you.' Then he asked, 'Did you stay at the inn?'

"I don't know of any inns."

'It's the house next door. Mr. Rad is probably still awake. He'll give you a room for free if you have breakfast with him."

"I'm having breakfast alone."

'Please have breakfast with him. He's a very lonely man. He built this inn to be surrounded by people all the time, but not many stay with him. He's a terribly lonely man.'

The younger man nodded reluctantly, although the thought of social meals made his stomach churn. He thought *people in this town didn't seem to realize that eating outside the privacy of one's home was lewd.*

"But what about my briefcase?" asked the rather young Hitler man.

'It'll show up again sometime. Nothing is permanently lost here.«

mr wheel

The night seemed artificial.

The young Hitlerite man stared up at the inn. The building was very tall. Not large, just high. Small in length and width, but incredibly tall. Small room on small room on small room on small room on small room on small room and so on up into the fake sky. The scarecrow building bent over the drunken SS officer like a giant mother over her disobedient beetle child. The firmament beyond seemed pitch black and crystal clear. The clouds made squeaky-creaking noises when they bumped into each other, like balloons rubbing against each other at a birthday party.

He swayed. His legs didn't function properly, as if one was longer than the other. Mud-headed, he rolled face first through the inn's door, his lips scraping the splintered orange wood.

Inside, emptiness awaited him. There was really just cobwebs, boxes, feelings locked away like in a closet, and a whole lot of the color black. A spiral iron staircase twisted in one corner of the room. She spiraled up to the next floor and a comparable mass of black. Otherwise there seemed to be nothing in this building.

The young Hitlerite was worried. He glanced back at the city. The surrounding houses were in darkness. They all looked old and abandoned for a long time. The shade. Even the light in the inn was dim and lifeless.

As he entered, he held the door open and peered up the stairs to see if anyone was there. He put a stone

in front of the door to let in the light from outside, but the door rolled him aside with its ogre weight. It closed behind him and the SS officer found himself trapped in the darkness.

With his hands outstretched, he took a few steps towards the stairs. Behind the silence he heard noises, a squeak. It had to be from the plastic clouds outside. The air in the room tickled the hairs on his arms.

When the banister touched his palm, he felt it like a relief, a safety bar. He began his ascent blindly, one step at a time, and with a throbbing sickness in his stomach. His eyes soon adjusted to the darkness and he could make out the steps of the stairs to some extent. Where the ground floor evoked closet feelings, the first floor evoked attic feelings. White blankets over the furniture. The second floor had a basement feeling with cobwebs and the sounds of a dripping faucet, but without a trace of pipes. Then the third floor, a cold bathroom full of dirt, cracks and buttonholes in the walls.

But the fourth floor reached his ears like a ghost. Approaching him up the stairs, the younger man encountered a door blocking his way. A tantalizing streak of yellow light spilled from beneath the threshold. The light provided evidence that someone actually lived here.

But it's so quiet, he thought, *who willingly lives in such a lonely, abandoned old building?*

"Mr. Rad?" he called through the powdery door.

No Answer.

He knocked and opened the door to a dimly lit room full of shelves of dusty, rusting antique crockery. A man was sitting alone in the corner, carving little chess pieces out of something attached to the bones of a man

larger beasts remembered. The younger called again, "Mr. Rad?"

The strange man turned his ashen face to the Hitlerite officer. His skin looked slack and cracked. The officer's brain almost fell out when his snow-white hair fell out. He realized what he was dealing with with this man.

The younger man asked, "Are you *old?* «

Mr. Rad grinned crookedly and then smirked. "Well, if that isn't the rudest greeting I've ever heard." His voice was as rusted and brittle as the antiques on the shelves.

The young officer sat down in a rickety chair directly in front of him and looked even more closely.

"But how can that be?" the officer asked. "It's illegal to live past 50."

The old man didn't seem to understand his drunken, slurred mumbling.

"So you want to spend the night here?" Mr. Rad asked.

'It's been decades since I saw a man your age. I was just a kid then."

The young Hitlerite man seemed both overwhelmed and disgusted by his appearance. He thought to himself: *How can the world allow him to exist? Is he the imperfect man I'm looking for? Could the annihilation of a single old man actually be the whole goal of my mission?*

"Well," said Mr. Rad. "It's been decades since I was a man your age." His rotten teeth seemed to curl up when he laughed. The sight of him almost made the SS officer vomit.

"Do you play chess?" the old man asked.

"Last time as a kid."

"After breakfast we should play chess."

The young officer didn't like the idea of playing chess with such a person. He was that *old.* And the

Thoughts of having breakfast with him made banana fibers form in his stomach and rise in his throat. Just the smell of the old man made him sick.

"Are you all right, Adolf?" Herr Rad asked. The young officer choked and coughed at him. "Adolf? she also think I'm Adolf Hitler?"

Maybe my real name is Adolf Hitler, he thought.

Mr. Rad put on his lensless sunglasses to to take a closer look at the young man's uniform .

In fact, it wasn't lensless sunglasses. It was a ... *see* glasses.

“You are a freak!” the young Adolf Hitler snarled at the man's disability. »Ametropia is no longer allowed in our society. You are a history book that has missed its final chapter.”

Herr Rad's mouth twisted. "You are an unusual person."

"Where am I?" asked young Adolf Hitler. “Is this here _____house? The landlord just ignored me when I... asked about it."

“Yeah, the landlord doesn't have a particularly long attention span. Once I talked to him for 20 minutes and he didn't even realize I was standing in front of him. Oh, I can't wait to play chess in the morning. It is such a beautiful and addicting game.«

Adolf felt nauseous. He staggered sideways and staggered around. He had to sleep. He had to pull himself together.

"I'm looking for a man," the younger officer blurted out. 'He is an *imperfect man.* «

"Imperfect? In what way?”

"I do not know exactly. I can't remember his face, but he's imperfect. It is a plague and I am here to rid society of it.”

"I don't think I've seen an imperfect man anywhere..."

'Well, you're imperfect. you are *old* "Am I the man
you're looking for?"

“I don't think you pose a threat to the nation, so I'm assuming you aren't. The man I'm looking for is riddled with diseased genes, and those genes can contaminate the entire human race if he reproduces."

“That sounds awful,” said Mr. Rad. “I'd like to help you, but I have no idea where to find him. I've never seen a monster like that in town."

"He must be stopped." Young Adolf Hitler clenched a fist.

Loud, shrieking screams and a thousand footsteps whizzed past their heads.

Nervous rashes scurried down young Adolf's spine. "What is that?"

The old man silenced him and put a reassuring hand on his shoulder.

The strange noise came from the corner above them
Standing, softened and went into a whimpering, twisted
Rat squeaks all over.

Mr. Rad whispered, "She's always restless at this hour." "Who?"

'Elsie, my daughter. She has these mood swings.”

"Mood swings?"

"She's not used to the idea of being dead yet."

"She is dead?"

The old man ducked his head as the girl's voice hissed through the air, yelling at the officer as if to attack him.

"Don't mention her death," Mr. Rad said. "It upsets her."

“How can she make those noises when she's dead?” “That's the problem. She doesn't realize she's dead is."

"What's going on here?" the officer asked. 'There is no order here. This place is so disorganized that it allows its dead to throw tantrums?”

"It's not that bad," Mr. Rad whispered.

He again silenced the young Adolf Hitler before he could continue to complain.

Hush, hush.

After a while, Elsie's calls and screams dissolved in the wood, while the SS officer's eyes closed...

Herr Rad nudged him and woke him up. "You're falling asleep, Adolf. It's better if you go upstairs to bed."

Adolf's voice was as blurry as his vision. "I want to, but..."

'Don't worry about Elsie. She never harms a fly. I will carry you.'

Mr. Rad lifted him off the chair with surprising strength and carried him up the spiral staircase.

"But you must beware of Dakar spiders," Mr. Rad admonished. "They have made their home here at the inn."

"Dakar spiders?" Adolf tried to free himself from the man's grip.

"You're safer from them here than anywhere else."

They went upstairs to the ninth floor, the top one, and the old man laid young Adolf on a big fluffy bed. The aluminum door rumbled like thunder as it closed behind him.

The Hitlerite man found his way into the musty sheets. They hadn't been washed in years. Dust rose from the bed and danced up in the faint light from the window.

The bed was surrounded by webs and threads, but the young man took them for ordinary cobwebs. He thought it best not to think about the Dakar spider, although he thought he knew for sure that such an animal was far too absurd to actually exist.

It must be a local superstition, he thought. *What a sad place that superstitions still exist here...*

In his daze, the young Hitler didn't care that the bedding stank of rancid meat and the room looked like a dark dungeon. He just wanted to sleep.

Just as his eyes closed, he noticed that someone was lying next to him, sleeping.

Mr Sausage

Next to the young Adolf Hitler lay a whale of a man on the pirate ship's sheet, snoring to himself.

A *fat* man.

Hitler could smell his sweaty bacon rolls, the stench seeping through the fabric and polluting the air. It was gross. Hitler sat up. Stared at the man with a frown.

The officer hit him, setting him in wobbling waves like a water bed. His snoring stopped. And started again. Hitler's teeth began to grind.

"Get out of my bed!" he hissed at the big bunch/man. He slapped him again and nudged him with his heels under the musty sheets.

The big man didn't move. Adolf kicked him again and tried to push the guy off the mattress.

"Get out, you fat, sweaty animal!"

Nevertheless, he didn't want to move or wake up. "He doesn't get up," said a voice from the
Space.

The officer's head jerked around and peered into the shadowy corners of the room. A young woman in nightgowns oozed out of the wood. She floated toward him through the cobwebs and piles of dirt.

"He never gets up," she said.

"Who are you?" Adolf asked.

"I'm Mr. Rad's daughter." "Elsie?"

"Yes. Who are you?"

"I don't know," said the officer. "I've lost my memory."

'Really?' Elsie leaned against the mattress and stared at his chest.

“You are *Adolf Hitler.* «

"I'm *not* Adolf Hitler," the young SS man replied. 'But *Adolf Hitler* is written on your uniform ...' 'Yes, but my uniform also says *God,* and I am certainly not God."

"But maybe you really are God."

"I highly doubt God loses his memory like I do."

"So you have no idea who you are?" "Not the slightest."

"Perhaps you are *Adolf Hitler...* "

"Maybe, but I don't have time to prove my identity right now. I have to get this big man out of here so I can sleep, and I have to sleep so I can find my briefcase in the morning, and I have to find my briefcase so I can get a photograph, and I have to get the photograph so I can remember who this man I'm chasing is."

"Who is this man you are hunting?" asked the ghost girl.

'He is an *imperfect* man.' 'Imperfect? In what way?"

"I don't know exactly," said the officer. "I can't remember his face, but it's imperfect. It's a disease and I'm here to..."

"Is *he* your imperfect man?" Elsie asked, pointing at the whale/man on the bed.

'Well,' he began, 'he's definitely imperfect, but his genes aren't wrong. Being overweight may be illegal, but it poses no threat to the purity of the human race."

She stared down, eyes sparkling, not knowing what else to say.

Young Hitler was very tired and perplexed. His mind was distracted when he realized he was having a conversation with a dead girl. she began

staring at him in a rude way and examining his little mustache, her thin lips grinning. The officer didn't know what to say. Mr. Rad had told him that she didn't want to see that she was dead, and he was careful not to broach the subject.

"I'm not a ghost," said Elsie.

Adolf hesitated and hesitated before answering.

"My father thinks I'm dead, but I'm not," she said. "Feel it."

The ghost girl took his hand, pressed it to her chest and asked, "Do I feel like a dead woman to you?"

She seemed cold, the skin icy, the flesh underneath firm instead of yielding. The skin also appeared paper-white and bloodless.

"No," he answered, his hand trembling on her inhuman skin. "You are very much alive."

She smiled, happy with his decision, bouncing slightly in excitement, but kept his hand tight against her skin.

“The whole town says I'm dead, but we both know that's not true. They are all terribly mistaken. Just because I can walk through walls doesn't mean I'm dead."

"But people must think you're a ghost just walking through walls in front of them," the officer said, trying to pull his hand away.

"Who do you tell that... The cockroach people scream hoots and murder every time I come through their walls."

“The cockroach people?” His hand was going numb against her cold skin.

“These are the little ones who live between the walls. Half insect and half human.”

"Between *these* walls?" he gestured nervously with his free hand.

“Yes, between *all* walls. They are plagues of men.' 'How disgusting...' he commented.

Elsie stopped short and looked away from him to sigh. She let go of his freeze-burned hand to move closer to him, nuzzling some parts of her body against his. A bolt of lightning shot through his spine. Then he noticed that she crawled into bed with him.

'What are we going to do *about him?* ' Elsie asked about the morbidly obese man.

Adolf looked around. "I don't know, but I have to sleep."

"Me too," she said. "And I don't think all three of us will fit comfortably in this bed."

“All three of us?” Adolf asked in an increasingly strong voice.

'Well, this is *my* bed,' said Elsie. "Many years ago this whale/man fell asleep in my bed and wouldn't wake up or leave after that, so I've had to sleep next to him every night for as long as I can remember."

"Years *ago?* And he didn't starve?"

Elsie shrugged. "He must be feeding off his body fat like he's hibernating."

'I don't know how we're all supposed to sleep in one bed. There must be other beds in this inn."

"Move a bit," Elsie said. "Make room for me."

She lifted the musty sheets and squeezed inside. It tingled as her icy body pressed all the way against his, pushing him against the whale/man's fat. When he touched his skin, the young Adolf Hitler realized that the morbidly obese man was wearing no clothes. Between icy stiff skin and sweating, solid,

Caught bare flesh, the officer didn't know whether to throw up or scream out loud.

"I'll help you find your briefcase in the morning," Elsie said. 'We're going to the bakery. Frau Adrett will definitely know where she is. She knows everything."

Her cold legs rubbed against his, maybe for warmth, maybe because she longed for physical closeness. Shortly afterwards she fell asleep next to him. His body was comfortable for her, but her body felt like razor blades to him.

It was three hours before Hitler's eyes grew heavy again. The lids half closed, but then opened again. Although he felt more tired than ever, he couldn't fall asleep. He lay brooding, trying to remember his real name and the imperfect man's face. Nothing came to mind.

Three more hours passed. Three hours with numb skin on his left side and sticky skin on his right. He couldn't sleep. Three more hours. He waited for sunrise, but the sky outside was still dark. *Does time go slower than usual here?* he mused. *Have I forgotten how many hours a night lasts?* Three more hours. It was getting ridiculous. He almost laughed at his situation. Caught between a hibernating fat man and a dead girl alive, he couldn't sleep or wake up because the day just wouldn't come.

Three more hours.

Giving up, he slipped off the sheets, stood and climbed over the fat man, being careful not to touch him. The freedom was satisfying as his left arm grew warm and his right dried. But then he didn't know what to do because he just stood there with no aim or purpose. He looked out the window to check

to look for a sign of sunrise, but there was nothing. The moon was high in the sky and wouldn't set, wouldn't make way for morning. The city was still in darkness. He could make out a few silhouettes of buildings, but otherwise nothing in the gloom. There was no light anywhere. He felt lonely.

He must have stood there for another three hours. Too confused and hesitant to do anything. He lay down on the ground, in the dust and cobwebs, and doubled over. Water dripped from his eyes, but he couldn't tell if he was crying or sweating.

After a few minutes his eyes closed, the thinking in his brain closed. He couldn't remember sleeping, but he had to be. At least for a few minutes or even for hours. His eyes opened, snapping him out of any dreams he might have been having just before something metallic hit the back of his head.

Mr Nothing

Aside from the sleeping ghost girl and the sweating fat man, young Adolf Hitler was alone in the room. Bloody swellings formed under the hair on his head. He didn't understand who hit him.

There was nothing there. He examined the room and found nothing in the cracks between the floorboards, nor behind or under the creaking bed frame, nor on the wall, nothing in the air between the dust floating in it. There was so much nothing in the room that he almost felt *nothing* had to be a living individual.

The blood felt hot and tickled his skin. Adolf watched the whale/man snore softly and wondered if it was he who hit the back of the head with the blunt metal object. Perhaps the morbidly obese man was just pretending to be asleep.

Hitler lubricated his muscles as he walked to the door and pushed it open to more darkness and more nothing. Here, too, he found no attacker. He crept to the stairs, went down the steps to the next floor and opened the door there. Another bedroom. Almost identical to the one above, but the bed was nothing but charcoal and dust. It must have burned some time ago. He looked around for a bathroom. There was none here.

A faint bluish light shone through the crack under the door of the room downstairs. Hitler felt mentally dizzy as his hand gripped the knob, but it wouldn't turn.

Closed?

He turned the other way. The knob moved a little and then stopped. So not completed

but just stuck. He braced his shoulder against the door frame and tried to twist the handle until the veined muscles of his arm flexed, pushing against the door with his full weight. A bursting sound, then it broke open.

High-pitched screeches assailed him as he entered. Hundreds of insect creatures scurried across the floor into the walls. The bright moon reflected blue paint off the brickwork and spread it across the carpet and bed.

A skeleton slept on the bed. The officer peered into his chest and found dozens of faces staring at him. Insect people hiding, shaking and trembling at the sight of him, as if he was about to crush them.

These disgusting creatures deserve to be trampled on, thought Hitler. *They are hideous and should be eradicated like any other vermin.*

He rubbed his head wound, took a step back, turned, and found a sink against the wall. There was no separate bathroom here either, but there was at least a basin and a mirror. He unzipped his uniform trousers and urinated in the sink. The smell of the tiny people's dusty bones and excrement filled his nostrils and made him want to leave the room immediately, but he had to wash his head wound and wipe the dirt off his face and hands.

"Why is it so hideous here?" he asked the mirror.

The blood had ruined his once perfect blond hair.
His uniform was filthy and badly damaged.

The mirror didn't answer.

“I came here to track down a single threat to the human race, but I have one

found whole place full of it. How can such a place exist?”

The mirror didn't answer.

A miniature woman crawled out from behind the faucet and stood in front of Adolf on the sink. She clutched her dress to her bosom—a strip of toweling fabric with a hole in the middle to put her head through. It covered the front and back of her body but exposed her breasts on the left and right.

The little woman moved on the china, fidgeting and turning jerkily.

"What are you doing?" young Hitler asked the little woman. "Do you dance?"

She spun in a circle and the fabric lifted, showing him her dirty privates.

"It's not dancing," he said. “Your movements are too chaotic. You have no rhythm. Dancing needs to be organized and calculated to be beautiful. Your movements are disgusting.«

He flicked her across the room with his middle finger and she squeaked as she flew through the air.

"Horrible creature," he said.

The hundreds of insect people around the bed began yelling at young Hitler, angrily demanding revenge. Perhaps the miniature woman had not survived the landing.

"You're just bugs," he scolded her, turning back to the mirror.

Adolf's reflection made him wince. His appearance looked unacceptable. Ugliness and chaos surrounded him, causing him to transform himself into something disgusting. He had no memory. That made him flawed, wrong. He deserved the execution. There had to be a way to reunite with the knowledge of himself and his mission.

"I'm not this Adolf Hitler," he said. "Isn't it?" He reached out to the mirror to wipe his reflection, but it missed the cold surface. Instead, his hand fell through. It wasn't a regular mirror, it was the next unnatural.

"It must be broken or damaged."

He stuck his face through the mirror and saw a room beyond it just like the one he was standing in.

"What's this now?" he asked the room. »The image in the mirror is tangible. As if it had three dimensions instead of two. How is that possible?"

He crawled through and became one with his own reflection. His characteristics reversed. He was now left-handed. His heart was beating on the other side of his chest. The armband with the swastika had changed sides.

Here he did not find the insect people in the bed. Her reflections hid. Adolf left the room, still reflected in the mirror, and went upstairs to the bedroom. He was hoping the whale/man and ghost girl reflections wouldn't be there so he could finally get some sleep.

Upon entering, he noticed that all the smells were gone and the dust on the floor looked like it had been painted on. Two figures lay in bed, but there was no snoring from them, nor did one seem so sweaty and the other so cold.

Hitler's breath forced itself out of his lungs when he realized that the two bed companions were actually not human. He touched one of them. Light crackling skin. They consisted of balls of crumpled newspaper compressed to emulate human forms.

"Dummy," he said. "Like dolls or..."

A movement stopped him. Something shuffled crackling out of the darkness. It sprang at Adolf from the shadows, claws whirling. In fact, there were several of them attacking from all sides.

Hitler threw himself on the ground and rolled on his side. He got to his feet outside the room and slammed down the stairs with the shadowy creatures on his heels.

He caught a glimpse of one: a toothy, spiky black child with no arms or legs. Just claws, mouth and eyes of fire. They rumbled like distant thunder.

He smacked into the room he'd come from and crawled through the mirror to the other side, tearing the knee of his uniform pants on the metal of the sink. He looked back. They didn't follow him. He only saw his own face staring at him.

Mr Eyebrows

"I heard you scream," said Elsie, entering the room while young Hitler studied his reflection carefully.

Adolf couldn't remember screaming.
"You shouldn't be in my mother's room," she said.
"There are beings in there that attacked me," he roared, pointing to the mirror.
"Of course you'll be attacked if you venture too far into the walk-in mirror," Elsie reprimanded. "The mourning demons hate having their territory trespassed."

»Mourning Demons? I've never heard of anything like this. I've never heard of walk-in mirrors either. You are unnatural."
"Mourning demons live in mirrors in places you can't see. So behind furniture or corners.«
'But I haven't seen them behind furniture. I went into the reflection, then through the door and up the stairs back to the room where they were hiding in the shadows."

"Yes, the room upstairs is beyond the reflection, so the mourning demons can live there. They live in their own world, on the other side of the mirror. They don't care for intruders."
'It's against nature. Mirrors are meant to reflect the beauty of man and not harbor the corruption of demons.«
"But it's true. Very few people know about them because they can't look in their mirrors. But these mirrors here are three-dimensional, so it works. They were invented by the golden eel.«
"Who is the Golden Eel?" asked the officer.

"He's the mayor of this town and everyone loves him."

'What kind of person goes by that name? *golden eel?* «

'He's not human. He is an eel of gold."

"Are you saying this town is run by an eel? No wonder she's unnatural! An eel cannot even do menial work..."

A memory flashed in his mind: one he worked at as a child.

As a boy he had worked in factories and as a waiter. All children were forced to do the heavy, poorly paid labor. A century ago, the lower classes had done the menial work and the children could play after school. But then the leader had all the unclean people eliminated, which happened to include the entire underclass. This left only the children for the annoying and unwanted activities.

All boys and girls between the ages of five and 17 were forced to do servile labor for eight hours a day, attend school for an additional eight hours, and try to juggle homework, chores, eating, and sleeping for the remaining eight hours to get. This strengthened the character of young people. It created inner strength and a sense of responsibility, preparing them for the world beyond childhood. The world of efficiency and perfection.

That's why this place made Hitler so sick. He had never experienced inefficiency before. He wasn't ready for this. All of this made him uncomfortable.

"I have to get out of here," he said to the ghost girl. 'Yes, please go. You're disturbing Mother." The girl pointed to the body on the bed, then she pulled Adolf to the stairs and said: "We have to go to sleep."

"I tried, but I couldn't."

“I can never sleep either, but I like to lie down and then close my eyes for a long time. Will you sleep with me?'

“I don't have time to sleep anymore. It should be morning any minute anyway.”

"The morning will probably be a long time coming."

'What do you mean? Surely this night has already lasted twelve hours. It *must* be morning soon.”

“But the sun is capricious and unpredictable. She opens when she wants. It can rise in a minute, but it can also take a year. There is no set plan.«

"Are you saying that this place doesn't even have an order of day and night?"

“The sun moves randomly. In fact, it's probably been a few years since they last went down."

"What? You mean I could be stuck that night for years? Forever?"

“Possibly, but maybe only for a few more seconds, you never know. There are no rules for it.«

“This place is despicable! Here the sun is not even in the sky when it has to be there. Man relies on the regularity of the sun. One cannot rely on arbitrariness.«

Then the ghost girl pressed her cold hand on his forehead, distracting him from the subject. Adolf flinched.

"Why are you touching me?"

"You're bleeding."

'Yes, I was hit in the head with a blunt metal object. I don't know who did it."

"It must have been Mr. Eyebrows." "Mr.

Eyebrows?"

“A ghost in love with me. It doesn't bother him that I'm not a ghost like him."

"Why did he hit me?"

"He's always jealous of my friend." "Oh," said Hitler, nodding.

At first he didn't even notice that she had just called him her boyfriend.

Mrs Ghost

"Can we go to sleep now?" asked the ghost girl.

"Will Mr. Eyebrows hit me again?"
She kicked the ground and said, "He won't bother you while you're with me."
'I won't sleep with you. I have to find another bed.«
"They're all occupied."
"By whom?"
"From other guests."
'From other guests? Are these all ghosts? I only see ghosts.«
"Are you calling me a ghost?" "I don't call
anyone a ghost." "Are you calling me a
ghost?"
“I just meant that this hotel reminds me of a graveyard. It is old and like death.«
'Oh, that's because it's night. During the day it is much livelier. The night is only shadows and old men.”

'I do feel like I'm in an old man's world. There are no old men where I come from. We have outlawed them because they are no longer efficient at that age and also because they are uncomfortable to be around.”
"Do you think I'm pretty?" asked the ghost girl.

He frowned. "You're just a kid."
"I'm 17," she raged. "I'm old enough to have children of my own."
'You're just a kid. You should work in a shoe factory.”

"So you don't want to go back to bed with me?" Her eyes got wet and wide.

"I'd rather sleep next to the mirror demons." Then she exploded. Adolf had known that his answer would make her sad or even angry would, but the girl went completely nuts.

Her body turned into icy lumps of energy, her features melted outward and her mouth curled around her head. Then she charged into Hitler, her whole body crawling up through his belly button and out through his back. Screaming, it swept down the stairs and through the walls, expanding its mass until it split in mid-air and became part of the building.

Then she was one with the crackling of the wooden floorboards and the cracking of the window glass.

After their icy passage, the young Hitler's skin had become wrinkled. The muscles seemed to be clenched, the jaw locked. He couldn't help but just stand there, shaking and frozen.

Wasps buzzed through his head.

mr wheel

He should have just laid down with the whale/man and slept, but decided against it. His head still felt chopped up, dizzy from all the chaos he'd been through. There was no way he wanted to return to that horrible disease-ridden bed. So he went in search of a vacant bedroom.

He tried every doorknob, looking for one that would work. Without success. He continued down the stairs, trying each floor. All doors were locked. He imagined other guests sleeping in these haunted rooms, like the whale/man above.

But didn't the innkeeper tell you that nobody stays at this inn? Presumably these rooms are just filled with more corpses. With corpses and ghosts and obese men...

Adolf found himself in Herr Rad's room. The elderly man was still awake and sat shirtless in a soot-stained armchair with an orange fur cover. The officer shuddered at the sight of the naked torso. The wrinkled old skin made him wince, but Herr Rad's nakedness brought with it something far worse, which made Hitler almost cry out in horror.

There was a wooden door in the old man's chest where his nipples would normally have been, and that door stood open to reveal his insides. His insides seemed cruelly unreal. There were no organs, just lumps of sticky flesh between rusted metal rods. It looked like clockwork. The old man fixed his rickety heart with a screwdriver and pliers, tightening screws and correcting the seating of individual components.

"So that's what it's like to be an old man," Adolf yelled in his face, spattering his saliva onto an earthy landscape painting on the wall. "You're forced to fix yourself like a car engine."

Mr. Rad blushed and slammed the door to his chest as if his insides were an intimate affair.

"I didn't hear you come in." His voice was weezy and dusty.

"You are a disgusting old man."

Mr. Rad smiled at his answer. “Yes, I suppose I can be disturbing. It's very easy to get nauseous when you get old."

Crickets chirped in the corners like little piglets as Adolf approached.

'Why aren't you offended? Are you so weak that you accept disgust as a gift?”

"No, no," said the old man. 'I'm just understanding. Open minded."

“Open-minded?” Adolf snorted. Then he shook his head and asked, 'Do you have another room? Mine is unacceptable.«

The old man tapped his wrist. "No, I'm sorry, but you have the only room that is not occupied."

'Are you mocking me? This room is occupied by the ghost of your dead daughter and the fattest man in the universe.”

"Oh." Herr Rad smacked his forehead with the palm of his hand. 'I forgot the two of them sleep there. I'm terribly sorry. Would you like to sit down and play chess with me while you wait for the bed to become free?”

“I have to sleep, Herr Rad. I'm here on a very important mission and I don't have time for chess. I am looking for the imperfect man.«

"Imperfect?" asked Mr. Rad. "In what way?"

"I don't know exactly," said the officer. “I can't remember his face, but he's imperfect. It is a plague and I am here to rid society of it.”

'Yes, I remember now. So sit down and let's play chess."

"But I have to sleep. You will rid the bed of the obese man immediately.”

'Oh, he should be up soon anyway. He's the doctor here."

"The doctor?"

How can such an unhealthy man be a doctor?

"Yes, he told me to wake him up if there was a medical emergency."

"Was there one?"

"No, not at all. Everyone is sleeping. There are usually no medical emergencies when everyone is asleep. In the morning he will wake up.«

"But when will it be morning?"

'Sometime, soon, I think. It hasn't been morning for years, but that could change at any moment. In the meantime we play chess. You sit down."

Adolf did Mr. Rad the favor, but only because his legs were too tired to carry him. He sat down on a chair made out of old encyclopedias. Much to young Adolf's regret, Herr Rad mistook the act of sitting down for consent to play chess with him.

The old man took a chessboard out of a leather case and placed it on a red stool between them. Then he pulled out the figures, which were less chess pieces and more morbid works of art. They made squeaking noises when he placed them on the game board.

"What's that?" Adolf asked.

"A game of strategy!" Mr. Rad crowed.

The figures turned out to be individual lumps of rubbery flesh and sinew. All farmers ended up in wet sheep eyes. The king was a big chunk of greasy steak, the queen a cat's paw covered in rose thorns. The bishop looked like a severed penis, erect and bleeding, while the jumper resembled a horse-shaped vagina. But the tower was the strangest figure of all. Four fingers held together by teeth growing from their tips. And at the foot of the figure there seemed to be a sweaty mouth, breathing and licking itself.

"Ready?" Herr Rad asked. "You start." Hitler
didn't start.

The figures crackled, pulsed and made popping noises. Some even exuded a kind of foam onto the chess board. The officer's face paled as the greasy smell hit his nostrils.

"Well?" asked the impatient Mr. Rad, clenching his fists in anticipation.

Hitler squeezed his fingers into one of the middle peasants who was slippery in his hands. He moved it two squares forward and slipped it out of his fingers onto the square. The figure sweated a puddle onto its new location.

Even chess, the most symmetrical and perfect game ever invented, is ruined in this horrible place.

Herr Rad moved his pawn before Hitler's. He licked the foam covering his fingers with a rough white tongue.

"Why am I being tormented like this?" young Hitler asked Herr Rad with a hard face when he paused for a moment.

Mr. Rad considered his strategy and paid no attention to him.

Adolf said, "I didn't deserve to be in such a mess. I'm in hell here."

"It's your turn," said Herr Rad.

"I'm going back upstairs."

"But we still have to play to the end," Herr Rad called out. "Please, Adolf..."

"My name's not Adolf."

"What's your name then?"

"I don't know, but probably not Adolf Hitler." "But doesn't your uniform say Adolf Hitler?"

"Yes, but my uniform also says *God,* and I'm most definitely not God."

"But maybe you *are* God?"

"I doubt God loses his memory like I do."

"So maybe you're fodder for the Dakar spider?" "What's that supposed to mean?"

“Oh yes, Dakar spiders have the ability to steal the memories of potential prey. They do this to disorient you, to make you easier to hunt and kill."

“What is this place where insects are at the top of the food chain? They're just tiny vermin, and man has every right to trample them."

Mr. Rad cackled. "I wouldn't try to step on a Dakar spider if I were you."

"This is sheer madness! I can't believe you're trying to convince me there's a tiny spider out there planning to eat me."

"As soon as she is hungry enough, yes."

"You, sir, are against nature!"

"Can we play now?" Mr. Rad asked. "Or are you afraid of being defeated by an old man?"

"I'll go upstairs and sleep." "But what
about the doctor?"
"I'll throw him out of bed if I have to."
In the door, Mr. Rad sent him a final comment: “Watch out for the Dakar spiders. They love to attack people while they're sleeping."

And from the stairwell young Hitler called back:
"Ridiculous! Pure nonsense!«

Ms Perfect

Young Adolf Hitler heard chirping clockwork noises as he climbed the stairs, likely from Herr Rad's hands re-inserting his chest to mend his faulty insides.

"I'm in my coffin," he said to the dust rising from the narrow stairway.

Then he stopped. He looked down at a piece of mirror in front of his feet and saw himself looking up at himself.

"Are you giving up?" he asked himself.

He grabbed his uniform by the collar. "Is that what you intend to do? Give up? Should a man of perfection allow himself to be conquered and conquered by the chaotic?”

Adolf's arm jerked up and forward, greeting the bottom of the stairs with a "Sieg Heil," as if saluting God, the most perfect being in the universe.

And he thought:

I am flawless

I will not allow weakness to overcome me.

I will find the unclean man and then the nation will be cleansed of his imperfections forever!

Then he heard crying from the room above. A woman's sniffles and wails.

He could smell rain.

As he climbed up to the room, the bones in his legs felt like they were made of wood from lack of sleep. There was a strange woman in bed. Not Elsie, someone else. Elsie wasn't there, nor was the whale/man.

Is this still the room I was in just now?

The woman in the bed had her face buried between her knees and was naked under the sheets. She wore long blond curls that cascaded down her scalp like golden waterfalls. Young Adolf found the blond hair a comforting sight.

His voice softened. "Why are you crying?"
She lifted her face. Sea blue eyes, skin like moonlight.

The face of an angel...
she is like me She is perfection.
Then his mind clicked.
There was something familiar about her. She had to be someone he knew, someone from his past. But his memories were covered with fluff.
"I'm crying because I missed you," the woman said, her tongue wet.
Adolf's thoughts raced: *Who is she? is she my girlfriend Ex girlfriend? Wife? How does she know me? What is she doing here in this place?*
"Come to me," said the woman.
Her arms opened, revealing her perfect breasts. Young Adolf went to her.
"I have no memory," he said.
"Don't talk," she silenced him. "You always talk..."
She pressed him against her warm skin, pressing her perfect body against his dirty uniform. Her hands crept down his back and felt his ribs, and then they wrapped them both in a big sheet full of dust and the smell of fat man and dead bugs, but Hitler didn't seem to mind.
He was in a dream. He had found home, although he didn't recognize it at that moment.

Mr D

Her arms wrapped around him and he shivered under her warmth. Her legs of hot steel pushed him inside her.

His eyebrows nestled against her face.

He wanted to wrap her body tighter around him, but as soon as she touched his chest, her body went thin, as if liquefying. Her face wrinkled and she slipped through his arms and was sucked into the filthy mattresses. She shrank.

A scream spurted out of Hitler's throat like lava as he realized what was happening. He searched the bed for her...

By now she must be as small as an insect, a needle in a bed sheet haystack.

And as he rummaged through the bedding, he felt the sheets rise over his head and grow into a mass of bearskins. Then suddenly he couldn't breathe because he was buried under millions of kilograms of cloth.

The sheet world looked murky and dirty. And Hitler was not alone ...

Something was sinking down on him through the sheets. His brain collapsed as it came into view: a forest of spiky blackness.

An elephant-sized spider with large lobster claws, snail eyes, and thick rubber tubes between its head and abdomen.

When Hitler ran away, he had to pull the sheets over his head to get through. He burrowed under the damp bedding and rolled and pushed on, choking, gasping as the spider lunged at him with hissing noises.

He made slow progress, but the spider couldn't catch him. The rise and fall of the sheets caused

Vibrations all around the spider, confusing her so much she couldn't make out exactly where the shrunken man was on the bed.

Then the ground disappeared from under Hitler's feet and he slid down the inside of the sheet, almost as if in free fall. He encountered what felt like a wooden bird's nest. The impact took his breath away and blood trickled from his bottom lip. It wasn't wood after all, it was a blanket, a fluffy pile of blankets.

When he got to his feet, Adolf was under the bed, 100 floors below. The smell of wine drifted in as he stared into the huge void beneath the bed, just waiting for the Dakar spider to hop down and continue to follow him.

She didn't come.

His eyes were red and watering. He was trembling all over and making involuntary low moaning noises.

Adolf staggered off the sheet and through the cavernous darkness beneath the mattress. His thoughts were a blurry tangle. He didn't know what to make of what just happened. For some reason his thoughts resembled visions of hollowed out angels.

Quite a while later, after he had collected himself a little, Adolf wandered out from under the bed and outside. The room felt like a whole new universe. A world of its own full of mountainous, shiny brown furniture and wallpaper patterns straight out of a picture book.

There were no more closet feelings here. Now he felt like in an ocean. So huge that it was difficult for him to breathe. Not as beautiful as the ocean, but just as powerful. An enormous swamp world of dust and splinters.

In the distance, the Dakar spider descended from the bedpost on a long, silvery thread.

"I'm not an insect," said young Adolf to the Dakar spider. »I am a pure and spotless human being, only 100 times smaller.«

He sauntered away, chin up, and snapped his finger at a fluffy winter sock. "What's my name?" he asked the sock. "I must get my memory back or my mission will end in failure."

Warmth settled around him from behind. He knew it had to be his lover, the perfect woman from his forgotten past.

He turned to her and asked, "Who am I?" She smiled and stroked his cheek. "Adolf Hitler," she replied.

PART TWO:
Down the rabbit hole

Mr Small

The sky was wrinkled and brown. A moonbeam smiled through the window, making her skin look like gleaming porcelain.

The shriveled couple slowly crawled across the room, looking up at the sky. The ceiling must be way up, but all they could see were brown jagged whorls. There was movement in the air. Something seeped in and out of the darkness. Adolf took a closer look. Then he saw long squid spines and spotted flying snakes spiraling through the air and dancing in the moonlight.

Adolf wondered if these were observations that could only be made from the perspective of miniature creatures. They were probably invisible to the normal-sized human eye. Then he wondered if his brain was damaged by the shrinking process and if he was just dealing with illusions.

No, that's impossible. My brain is incapable of producing hallucinations. My theory that smallness is capable of discovering what is invisible to the naked eye sounds perfectly reasonable. It's like looking through a microscope, but what I'm seeing here isn't bacteria or germs. There are details that remain hidden even under a microscope. Not because of their tiny size, but for other reasons. Probably because I'm so small I can see between dimensions, or it's just other unnatural blemishes that create this unstable place.

Her footsteps sounded unusual. They didn't produce the creaking of wooden floorboards as before. Her footsteps sounded like loud pings, like needles falling on tin.

"Where are we going?" the woman asked.

"I don't know," Hitler replied. "In any case, we can't go down the stairs in our present condition."

"The Dakar Spider is still after us..."

"The Dakar Spider is unnatural, and I refuse to acknowledge the existence of such a creature."

He crossed his arms to reinforce his words. They moved cautiously through the darkness of the room The gloomy corners of this world/room were thickly covered with dust and cobwebs. Now that he was little, there seemed to be a lot more of it. The cobwebs piled up in silver mountains, studded with blood-red pods and sea-green sticky tentacles hanging down in front of them.

"There's a hole," the woman said, pointing to a black blob among the mounds of cobwebs.

"I don't trust the cobwebs," Adolf said to her. "We have no choice."

She ran on, ducking under the first green tendrils and twisted tentacles. Hitler followed. They groped their way through the cobweb world, violet hands dangling from threads above their heads. White bundles hung from the nets, some half open to reveal tiny human skeletons hanging silent in the heavy air.

Adolf's eyes fell on another bundle of nets. A big. Its contents seemed alive, breathing, snoring. He stopped. took a closer look. A part hung out and breathed gurgled. It was the whale/man who had previously occupied the bed. The Dakar spider must have shrunk it in its sleep and carried it up into those spider mounds as food for later. The morbidly obese man nestled comfortably in the net. What had happened to him didn't seem to bother him much.

Now I know where he went after I left the room, thought Adolf.

Although Elsie was gone too.

Did the Dakar spider get them too? Can spiders eat ghosts? That seems impossible, but it's also impossible that ghosts even exist. Or spiders that shrink people.

"We should hurry," the woman said, snapping the officer out of his torpor.

They hurried on until they came to a hole in the wall. A damp hole caused by water eating through the wood. The ground beneath her feet was sweating out a stinking broth. The smell offended Hitler's senses.

"What if there's a spider in the hole?" he asked her. He already knew the answer to the question, and her frown in response only got on his nerves even more.

"Let's go." She led the way, pulling him by the hand.

Before long they were in pure blackness. All her senses were stifled by hot damp and the smell of putrefaction. After several minutes of blind wandering, slipping through mold and brushing against cobwebs, they spotted a light ahead. They even heard sounds that might have been human voices. They walked toward the light until they reached a small room at the end of the tunnel.

Mr. Mustache

The room was small, so small that even in their shrunken state they could touch the ceiling. Squishy gray mold crackled and bubbled on the walls. A door waited on one side of the room. A miniature plastic door for tiny dolls. In the center of the room was a glob of acidic slime, crackling and breathing and glowing green like a firefly. It generated heat and gave off an intense yeasty fishy odor that attacked Hitler's olfactory nerves.

"What do you think that is?" asked the perfect woman. "It's a collection of filth and disgust," he replied. "No," said two men coming through the miniature door
came storming on the other side of the lump. "It's the Pile of Bad Knowledge."

The men wore clothes made from the skins of horned toads and dragged behind them a naked woman weeping and writhing.

"Those who have bad knowledge become one with him," they proclaimed.

The horned men pushed the screaming woman into the lump. It swelled down her body, sucking her deep into his mass. Hitler watched as she squirmed in the green broth, unable to free herself as the slime slowly dissolved her.

After watching for a few seconds, Adolf felt bored with the process and turned to the men. One of them sported a rather impressive mustache, from which Adolf concluded he was in charge.

"Bad knowledge?" he asked the man with the mustache. "What's bad about knowledge?"

"The goddess says knowledge is evil," he replied.

"Nonsense!" exclaimed Adolf. “Inefficiency and imperfection are evil. One would be imperfect without knowledge.«

"Don't you think that lump of poison is pure evil?" asked the man with the mustache.

"No," said Adolf. "He does have some characteristics of evil, but I don't see what that has to do with knowledge."

The men in the toadskin robes shifted their feet and said, 'The goddess says this lump of slime was once a collection of thoughts so intelligent that they condensed into matter. And given its ugliness, *she* concluded that intelligence must be something ugly.”

"A culture without intelligence *is* something ugly," Adolf said to them. "Your goddess is profoundly mistaken."

"You bastard!" the man with the mustache shouted. "Who are you to judge the goddess?"

"I do not know who I am. My memories are pretty messed up.”

The man with the mustache studied his uniform carefully. "You are Adolf Hitler."

“I'm *not* Adolf Hitler. I don't know who Adolf Hitler is, but I assure you he was taller than two inches that I am now."

"Then maybe that God person is you..." the man with the mustache mused.

“God is the name of a higher being and not that of a human-insect like me. You should know that, after all you have a goddess. A god is the male version of a goddess. But the God I'm talking about is the only true God. He is perfect, something I temporarily am not. But I want to emphasize that one day I will be perfect again.«

"I do not quite understand. Are you claiming to be the male version of a goddess?" asked the man with the mustache.

"I think your lack of intelligence is causing this confusion," Hitler said. »I am neither God nor Adolf Hitler. I am a temporarily flawed perfect man who presently has no name.' 'Come on,' said the man with the mustache. "We must see the goddess at once. If we don't marvel at them every ten minutes, we'll crumble in the cobwebs Dust."

"That's completely impossible," said Hitler. 'You must be wrong about this. I agree with you that beings can turn to dust, especially after a very long period of time. But failing to look at a goddess would certainly not do that."

"You sound like you might have bad knowledge," said the man with the mustache. "Don't drag it into our colony, or she might banish you to the slime of knowledge. "

"Don't worry," said Hitler. "Most of my intelligence has either been forgotten or thrown into confusion."

Both men led Hitler, with the perfect woman obediently following, up a sloping cardboard corridor to a balcony that must once have been an air vent.

"There she is," said the man with the mustache, pointing 100 floors down to a gigantic bed.

The goddess was the corpse of the mother of ghost girl. The body that hundreds of the had infested miniature people from the mirror room.

"She's dead," Hitler told them as he surveyed the colony of little people who lived in the hollowed-out corpse.

"She isn't," they said. "She's a skeleton, but definitely alive in spirit."

"Your culture is unnatural," said Hitler.

"No, she isn't," the man with the mustache called out. 'Your muddled mind has it all wrong. The Endurers have a culture contrary to nature.«

"The Endurers?" asked Hitler's perfect wife. "What makes them unnatural?"

"You're bad," said the man with the mustache. "The Ultimate Evil."

"You're intelligent, aren't you?" asked Hitler. “I bet you think they're the ultimate evil because they're geniuses. They're probably smart enough to know how to restore my memory and my normal size!"

"The culture of the sufferers is unnatural," proclaimed the man with the mustache.

"That may be so, but no more than your culture," said Hitler.

"If you really feel that way, we must send you to them at once," said the man with the mustache. "Otherwise you will insult the Goddess, and then *She must* banish you to the pile of Bad Knowledge."

"That might be for the best," Hitler replied, and the perfect woman agreed.

Without hesitation, the men escorted them back down the corridor to the door they had come through. But when it opened, they found themselves in another room. It contained no toxic snot. Rather, it was filled with concrete statues of angels, and a huge hole gaped in the floor.

"What kind of madness is this?" Adolf cried. "This room used to have a bunch of poisonous snot in it, and now it's filled with concrete statues of angels, and there's a huge hole in the floor!"

The man with the mustache reassured Hitler and said, "Yes, the size of our living space is so small that we have to keep many rooms in the same place. You just push a button on the door, and *wash!* – one room becomes another.«

"How does that work?" asked Adolf.

"If we had that kind of knowledge, it would have far-reaching consequences," the man with the mustache replied. “The Endurers created this system long ago, when they were still here with us. Only they know how it works. We just know how to use it, and that's enough for us."

"So we have to go down into this hole?" asked Hitler.

"Yes, you will then fall several thousand meters," he said.

"Won't that kill us?"

"No, the Endurers arranged it so that you fall very slowly and land on your feet."

"How amazing!" said Hitler. 'I would love to meet these sufferers. They must be much closer to perfection than the usual denizens of _____hausen."

“You are disgusting, a plague on this world. We wish someone would come and save us from them,' said the man with the mustache.

Hitler frowned at him, then took his perfect wife by the hand and jumped down the hole with her.

woman darkness

They floated for several hours, clinging to each other and sighing as they fell.

"It's not every day that I fall into foreign territory," said young Hitler to the perfect woman. "It's pretty perverse, and mostly uncomfortable."

The perfect woman said nothing and squeezed his hand. Her silence made him feel warm and comfortable.

"You know me better than I know myself," he said.
They fell a few more minutes...
"No one knows you better than I do," she replied.
A few more minutes falling ...
"Then who am I?" he asked her. "Tell me about my past."
No Answer.
A few meters passed...
"You are Adolf Hitler," she said.
A few meters more...
Hitler slowly considered the possibility that this perfect woman wasn't real. She knew no more about him than he did, and that seemed very little. Perhaps she knew even less. At least the young officer knew that his real name was not Adolf Hitler.

Or is it? Am I really the one they call Hitler? No, Hitler is certainly a great man who would never jump into a dark hole like I do. It must be a great king of man because his name is next to God on my uniform. And I am very sure that God embodies the most perfect being in the universe. So is that Hitler?

second most perfect? Conceivable. I am not sure. I'm just sure I'm not him. But what about this woman? She must be a figment of my imagination. Or I'm living in my subconscious right now, and this woman is part of it. A fantasy of memory. She knows nothing of my past because she is an outgrowth of my currently faulty brain.

After that, Hitler didn't know what to say to her. They just floated through the darkness, invisible to each other. He looked up, searching for the lighted room from which they had jumped into the hole, but there was nothing but darkness above them. He looked down and he couldn't see any light there either, not even to the side of them. Didn't they fall at all, just hover in place?

"The case is really taking a long time," Hitler said to the darkness.

"Well, at least falling doesn't hurt us," replied the darkness.

Hitler fell asleep and woke up a couple of times. Or he just blinked. The time seemed different to him than usual, and for young Adolf everything was becoming confusing. He dozed in and out of his existence. The only constant he felt was a light breeze on his uniform and the warm fingers in his hand. He wasn't sure there was another woman clinging to those fingers. There was nothing but darkness.

"The bottom of the pit may have disappeared," said the darkness.

"That's impossible," said Adolf.

He had hardly spoken the words when her feet landed gently on solid ground.

"And now?" asked the darkness.

"I'm not sure," Adolf replied. “We can't see if there's anything here or not. The darkness is

endless."

"Perhaps these sufferers live in darkness?" the darkness suggested.

"That would be absurd," said Adolf. "If they are men of science, they will live in culture and not in darkness."

"What is culture?" asked the darkness.

"Culture is a civilization devoid of any imperfection." They are died and we are alone in a dark world.«

'I fear your logic, but it may be correct. In that case we would be trapped and lost. Then we will most likely die."

"We must grope for food," the darkness suggested. "We could survive that way."

The woman searched the ground around her with her hands.

"There is no value in surviving in a world of darkness," said Adolf.

The woman continued her search on the ground. Adolf didn't bother to help her.

"Do you remember when we met?" he asked.

Break.

"Of course," said the darkness. "How did

we meet?"

She didn't answer, but felt more frantically with her hands.

"I found something!" she cried.

"I won't eat anything you found in the dark," he told her.

"There's nothing to eat," she said. "It's some lever."

"Pull it," said Adolf. "He could reverse gravity and bring us back up."

She pulled the lever and light exploded into the room from below.

"One walk!" she cried.

The lever had opened a trapdoor in the floor.

"Come," the woman said as she pulled the officer towards the world of the new light.

Mr. Noseless

They descended a ladder of red and white plastic straws, through billowing pink clouds that felt spongy and wet against her skin. Beneath the blanket of clouds grew tall trees of blue mushrooms and sharp stalks of cinnamon-colored grass.

"Here we are," the woman said as her feet touched the yellow ground.

It was a whole new world down there. The underground seemed to have its own self-sufficient atmosphere. Light from an artificial sun shone through the floating pink pillow clouds. The landscape was a wild jumble of wet, rubbery vegetation. Huge oily mushrooms high overhead, sticky puddles of jam underfoot.

"This place is unclean," said Adolf to the perfect woman.

She shrugged.

"We are in nature, but it is unnatural," he continued. "This is not a friendly environment."

The perfect woman wasn't listening. She was engaged in making a dress from a huge flower blossom.

“We must find civilization as soon as possible. These sufferers must live in a village nearby.” Adolf gestured in the direction of the artificial sunlight. “This way. There must be a settlement that way.”

For several hours they trotted through greasy mushroom forests and powdery yellow spore fields, but encountered no sign of civilization. Adolf did his best to keep his uniform clean, constantly wiping away yellow dust with his knuckles. He also gave his

Best to complain about every little thing that displeased him about the underworld.

“Purple grass? Grass shouldn't be purple. What crazy kind of grass grows purple instead of green? And is that a square rose? Flowers cannot be square. And what about that tree over there that has tennis shoes growing instead of fruit? Shoes are made in factories, they can't just grow on trees. Why are you wearing a pair of these? I smell something wormy. *Worm-eaten* isn't even a real smell. What about those boulders? They look like a huge collection of marbles. And why, oh, why is a waterfall of marshmallows shooting out of that mountain face?”

"A waterfall of marshmallows?" asked the perfect woman.

"Yes, over there," Adolf said, pointing to a stream of white goo running down a ridge in front of them.

"I don't think those are marshmallows," the woman said.

"In any case, it's a frothy, fluffy white substance," said Adolf. "They may not be marshmallows, but I wouldn't be surprised if they turn out to be marshmallows upon closer inspection."

They moved on for a closer look. When they reached the waterfall, they spotted a strange man. The odd man wore clothes made of fur, which Adolf assumed came from a mouse. He sat by the white stream and filled a bowl with the sticky stuff from the small cataract.

The man heard their footsteps and turned to them. Adolf cringed inwardly at his looks. The man had no nose. It must have been recently torn off by a wild animal, because his

Face was like a bloody mess. The man smiled and waved at them as he ate the white soup with a homemade wooden spoon.

As the marshmallow goo left the spoon and dripped into the man's mouth, Adolf's jaw dropped. He realized the substance wasn't marshmallows, but some foul-smelling lard.

"Why did you eat that?" Adolf said, as if accusing the man of doing something wrong.

"I'm hungry," said the noseless man, still smiling at her.

"That's disgusting," said Adolf.

"It's actually quite tasty," said the man, raising his thick, bushy eyebrows. "I haven't eaten anything all day."

"Just stop it," said Adolf. "It's disgusting to watch you eat, especially with that ugly wound on your face."

"All right," said the noseless man. He merrily poured his food into a pitcher and stowed it in his backpack. "I'll save it for later."

"Thank you," said Adolf. He was pleased that the noseless man understood how disgusting it was to watch him eat. "Can you show us the way to civilization?"

“Of course, colleague. I went to _____city myself
On the way."

"_____town? How are the residents of _ _____ town like that?”

"Well, if you ask me, they're all pretty crazy."

"Crazy? How terrible! I got the impression they must be intelligent people.«

"You're intelligent, too," said the noseless man. "Some very, very brilliant minds live there."

"But you said you were crazy?" "Yes, they are

crazy too."

"But they can't possibly be intelligent if they're also crazy."

'Well, these people are. They're crazy, but they're crazy geniuses. You know that the greatest geniuses are usually eccentric, right?'

"No," replied Adolf. "That's absurd. A madman cannot possibly be a genius. A genius is someone who has great intelligence, acts efficiently, and is also of perfect sanity.

Madness or insanity are great imperfections such as genius never possesses."

"Well, you'll see."

"Possibly..." mused Adolf, "they could have a *certain* intelligence. Do you happen to think they have the intelligence to restore us to natural height?"

"No," said the noseless man. "I was hoping the same, but these people don't want to know. Their homeland is small and they have no intention of leaving it to make it big."

"But you might have the knowledge and just never used it?"

"Possibly," said the noseless man.

They stopped talking and stared at each other for a long time. Adolf examined a plant that had human fingers instead of thorns. They seemed to crouch and beckon to him.

"You haven't seen an imperfect man down here, have you?" Adolf asked the noseless man.

"Imperfect? In what way?" asked the noseless man.

"I don't know exactly, but he's a plague on this world, and I'm here to rid it of him."

"Am I your imperfect man?" demanded the Noseless One. “As you can see, my face is missing the nose. Physically, I am quite imperfect.«

"I am not sure. I can't remember exactly what constitutes a man's imperfection, but I don't think a man missing a nose can be important enough for someone of my stature to look for him. The one I'm after has impure genes."

'Well, there's a good chance your husband is down here. The Dakar Spider shrinks quite a few people who normally escape into this underworld before the spider gets them."

"That's good," said young Adolf. “I'll track him down here and destroy him immediately. But then I have to find a way to grow back to normal size so I can return to my stable, healthy, perfect lifestyle."

"Then we need to stay in touch so we can find a way to return to normal size together."

"Good idea. While I find your missing nose extremely disturbing, I think it wise to forge an alliance."

"Yes, an alliance."

Behind Adolf's shoulder the perfect woman simmered, annoyed at the thought of having to share his company with the noseless man. She hissed at him and glared at him. Adolf understood her feelings.

"My name is Eyebrows, Roger Eyebrows," he said, holding out his hand.

Adolf did not return the gesture. "And

you must be Adolf Hitler."

Mr. Roger eyebrows

"Where is this town now?" Adolf asked Roger Eyebrows as they walked cautiously through the mushroom forest.

"Just keep walking," the noseless man replied.

So they walked on for a few more hours. The landscape changed several times along the way. After the mushroom world, they wandered through fields of skeleton trees, into a desert of discarded washing machines, and finally into a morass of brown glue, until they reached their destination.

"Here we are," announced the noseless man.

There was nothing civilized about the landscape of red mud.

"Where?" Adolf asked the noseless man.

"All around us."

Adolf looked at the endless kilometers of tar mud.

"There's nothing here," Adolf said to him.

'Well, the city's shut down for the moment. I have to turn them back on to wake them up."

"You have to turn it on?" asked Adolf. "You can turn a whole city on and off like a lamp?"

"Sure," said the noseless man. 'The Golden Eel invented it. He likes to have complete control of the city, in every way he can."

"You know the Golden Eel?"

"Yes, he's the mayor of the city."

"But I thought he was the mayor of the town up there."

"I think you're wrong," the noseless man said as he walked toward a large black snail-shaped rock. He opened a purple compartment

on the side and flipped a small switch inside.

And turned on the city.

The city exploded in sight: a cluster of spikes and structures with black buildings like cacti, dark and crude, rising squeaking out of the mud. All around them men would appear, walking, talking, and working as if they had no idea they had just outgrown the ground. They hurried by in mud-stained suits. Many of them had hideous deformities. Some had three eyes, others had shark fin heads, crab claw hands, demon tails, bubbling frog bellies, eagle feathers or porcupine hair. Some of them wore

Fur suits, others black leather with spiked collars.

"A whole city full of freaks!" Adolf yelled at the city full of freaks.

The perfect woman shared his opinion.

"Welcome to _____town," said the noseless man.

Adolf stepped onto the paved path and stared up at the burnt-rubber skyscrapers with their whispering watermills dangling from balconies, the glassless panes and the scorpion tendrils crawling in and out of the buildings. Huge beetles sped along the streets like automobiles. Adolf's face contorted at the sight, which seemed so complex and chaotic - alive and yet sick. Distorted people walked around in strange ways, *imperfect* people. But they were not like humans with imperfect genes, which Adolf professionally tracked down to earn his living. These creatures could hardly be considered human beings. In fact, they should have been called demi-humans. Or less-than-humans. Or anti-humans.

Just freaks. Animals that should be chained.

"Have you got a leash for her?" the noseless man asked.

“A leash?” Adolf asked.

The noseless man pointed to the perfect woman. “She needs a leash in town. And a brand. That's the law."

“Women have to be leashed?” asked Adolf. "What a curious law..."

"You must be joking," said the perfect woman, but Adolf held up his hand to stop her from continuing.

"That's pretty barbaric," said Adolf. "They let all these weird creatures roam free, but my most perfect partner needs to be chained."

"That's the law," Roger said, eyebrows.

Adolf thought about it. "Well. I will not break the law. This city may be an unnatural disease, but it is my only hope for our return to the normal world.”

"I don't see any other women on a leash," said the perfect woman, and Adolf waved her hand again to silence her.

"You'll have to register them at the pet store," the noseless man explained.

"At the pet store?" the woman called.

"Then take us to the pet shop," Adolf said to the Noseless One.

'Actually, I'm far too busy to take you anywhere. It's the red house on the corner."

“Busy?” asked Adolf.

"I must make preparations for tonight's festivities."

"I thought we were partners?"

"Partner?" the noseless man asked. "Why should we be partners?"

"Because we're both looking for a way to get back to the surface."

"Surface?" the noseless man wondered. "I do not know what you mean."

"We have to find a way to get back to our normal size."

“Our normal size? We *are* our normal size. You are a very unusual man. What did you say your name was?'

"I didn't say anything," Adolf said.

"Oh yes," he said after looking at the uniform. "I remember. You are Adolf Hitler.”

Mr song

The cricket people hopped, craned their necks, and trembled as they crossed the street to the pet store.

"Amazing!" Adolf exclaimed as they entered the stone house.

"Wonderful," mimicked a parrot in the corner.

The parrot had peachy plumage and the head and breasts of a human female.

Young Adolf examined all the animals in the shop. Each seemed to be some kind of animal/female mutation. There was a woman/cat with fur and claws that lashed out at a dead woman/mouse. A woman/goldfish in a giant water glass, breathing through gills in her slender pale throat. And even a woman with floppy ears and a wet nose.

The pet shop owner proudly surveyed his inventory while rubbing the black and white hairs on his chin. Adolf walked towards him and discovered that he recognized the man's face. It was Herr Rad, the old owner of the inn.

"Mr. Rad?" asked Adolf.

"Who?"

"Aren't you Mr. Rad from upstairs?"

"I'm Herr Lied," the owner of the pet shop introduced himself. "I'm the owner of the pet shop."

"Then I'm wrong," said Adolf. “You look exactly like a man named Mr. Rad. It's probably because you're both old. I'm not used to old people. They all look the same."

Mr. Song grinned crookedly and then smirked. 'Well, if that isn't the rudest greeting I've ever heard. Who may you be?'

"At least not Adolf Hitler," Adolf told him. "We're looking for a way for this woman to move around this city in accordance with the law."

'She needs to be registered,' said Herr Lied. "But no worry. Just let me fill out this form..."

Mr. Song took a square piece of orange paper from a white piano in the middle of the room. He sat down at the piano and used it as a desk.

"Well," said Herr Lied. "What's your lady's name?"

Adolf thought hard about it, but he couldn't answer the question because he didn't remember her name. He looked at the woman for help, but she avoided his gaze as if she didn't know herself.

"Her name is..." Adolf just took the first word that came to mind. "must...must..."

'Mus?' Herr Lied wrote it down.

"When did you get married?" Adolf's

eyes widened.

"When did we get married?" he called. "We are not married."

"Not married? Well, I can't register a stray woman on you. You must marry her at once or I shall be forced to put her to sleep."

Adolf's gaze met that of the woman. Her eyebrows twitched in panic.

Marry? Well, in the normal world, I could already be engaged to this woman. Marriage probably wouldn't change anything anyway, but it would save her from death. Besides, she's part of what I've lost, and she may be my only hope of regaining my memory.

"All right, we're going to get married," Adolf said.

"You have until this evening," Herr Lied said. "After that, she must either be registered or euthanized."

"I'll make sure we get married," Adolf said. "Where can the marriage ritual be performed?"

"At the ceremony tonight." "What ceremony?"

'It is a celebration of the Golden Eel, our Emperor.' 'Emperor? I heard his title is Mayor." "No, the Golden Eel is our Emperor."

"Is there a Frau Adrett in town?" Adolf asked. "I was told that a woman named Adrett could help me find what I'm looking for."

"What are you looking for?" Mr. Lied asked.

"I am looking for an imperfect man. I can't remember exactly what he looks like, but I have a picture in my briefcase that can tell me. Ms. Adrett should know where my briefcase is and where this man is. However, I doubt that my briefcase is in this city. But it's possible that Ms. Adrett is here. And possibly also the imperfect man.«

"You've come to the right place to find a wife," Mr. Song said. "I have a list of every woman in town, and who owns them."

Mr. Song opened a large book full of scrawled words. Adolf tried to read them, but they didn't seem to be words from a real language.

"Ah, here we have Frau Adrett," said Herr Lied.

Adolf looked closely at the nonsensical words and could not see any system in them. They seemed to move as if melting off the side.

"It belongs to the high priest." "Are you sure?"

"Yes, the High Priest. He lives in the tin house under the bridge."

"Where's the bridge?"

"You will find her," said Herr Lied. "You can't miss the bridge."

Mr host

As they walked down the street in search of a bridge, Mus held Adolf's hand in an attempt to appear leashed to him. The natives scurried past them like startled locusts. All men. Not a single woman. They must have left them in cages in their homes.

Every mutated anti-human he passed made Adolf sick. They bounced around quickly but with no pattern or discernible direction, as if they were just moving for the sake of movement and had no real destination. The sight made him dizzy. He looked down at his feet, covered his eyes with a hand and breathed deeply.

"What's the matter?" the woman asked softly.

He looked into her eyes to calm himself. She smiled and his heart warmed.

"Let's rest for a while," Adolf said to her.

She nodded and together they went to the nearest inn, which had a roof like it was made of melting rubber and walkways like on a railway track. She dragged him to a corner table away from the other patrons, three bug-men at a moldy table in the center of the common room, hooting to themselves and uttering strange words.

"This town is driving me crazy, Mus." His face was flushed crimson. "I must get out of here before she overwhelms and imperfects me."

"Don't worry," Mus said. 'We're getting married tonight, and then everything will be all right. We'll be so happy none of this matters anymore."

She smiled and put her warm hand on his chest where his heart was pounding.

A shudder ran through him.

“People here are supposed to be geniuses, but I see nothing genius in these monstrosities. I see more imperfections than my eyes can handle." "They may be imperfect, but they are nonetheless human beings."

"Nonsense," said Adolf, clenching a fist. “Human beings strive to be efficient and to control their environment. But I have no control here. My surroundings are driving me insane.«

"You'll get used to it eventually."

“That's exactly what I'm afraid of. As soon as this chaos no longer affects me, I belong. Then I will also be one of those monstrosities, absurd and without any control. I will be ugly, wear the dirt on my skin for a uniform, and worship a grotesque eel as a god.”

"You talk too much," Mus said. "Why do you always talk so much?"

"I'm only talking because it's important."

"I bet you talk even when nobody's around."

"Maybe I will."

"I bet you talk to strangers you meet on the street."

“I only talk when it's important to talk, and right now it's important. I have to pull myself together to find the bridge and then go under the bridge to find the high priest's house so I can talk to Mrs. Adrett so I can find my briefcase so I can look at the photo so I can find the imperfect man so I can complete my mission so I can figure out how to get back to my normal size so I can go home.”

"Talk, talk, talk," said the perfect woman.

Adolf looked around the tavern for anyone to talk to besides his future pet wife. Except for the Beetle men, there were no other guests present, and they didn't make an impression on Adolf that was worthy of conversation. He calmed his still dizzy eyes and focused on the innkeeper. Adolf recognized him. It was the same innkeeper as before in _____hausen. The only person halfway

looked normal. Adolf got up and let Mus sit in her chair. The landlord recognized him immediately.

"Adolf Hitler," he said. "I see you're still in town."

“But I'm not still in town. This is
_____city, not _____hausen.«

'Yes, but this is the same inn. The Golden Eel has decided to save money by using the same tavern in both cities.”

"But that is impossible. This building we're in isn't more than a meter tall. How can cockroach people and normal-sized people share the same tavern?”

"That is very easy. A shrinking and enlarging technique is built into the door of this inn. people out
_____town get bigger as they walk through the door,
and people from _____hausen shrink. The inn knows
actually an in-between size.«

'So what you're saying is that I'll go back to my normal height when I go through the door
_____house?"

"No," said the innkeeper. “When you walk through the door, you regain the size you were when you entered. You can't choose what size you want."

“But if you have the technology to enlarge a human being, then so must it

give me a way to get me back to my normal height.«

“You should talk to the Golden Eel about that, Herr Hitler. I don't know science."

"Where's the Golden Eel?" asked Adolf.

"He lives in _____burg across the bridge."

"Oh, is he?" exclaimed Adolf. 'I'll go to him right away. Where is this bridge?'

"Everyone knows where the bridge is," he said.

"But I don't," said Adolf. "Could you please tell me the way there?"

'Just keep following the road. I think the bridge is at the end."

"Are you sure?"

'No, that's just what I heard. I serve drinks to the people of _____town, but I've never been there myself."

'Well, thank you for that information, Herr Landlord. Can I have a sherry, please? I usually prefer sobriety to intoxication, but I need something to calm me down.”

"Sure," said the innkeeper. "But you must take it out the door."

"Why is that?" asked Adolf.

"Pets aren't allowed here," he said, pointing at Mus. 'I keep a decent house here. My guests don't want to find hair and fleas on their tables and chairs.«

'It's absurd, but I defer to your authority.' 'Women are filthy creatures. You should see them right away put down for you after their first litter.' 'People are so cruel here.'

Adolf drank the grey, turf-tasting non-sherry liquid after the innkeeper pushed the glass across the counter to him. He shook himself in the direction of the innkeeper and left without paying, he being

Mus angrily grabbed like she had done something wrong, like it was her fault for being a dirty animal.

When leaving the inn, Adolf noticed that the streets had emptied. No chaos, no crowds, no mutant people hopping around. Just Hitler and his fiancé walking among the bland, skeletal houses.

"Where's everyone gone?" they asked the silence.

A light wind combined with rusted metal answered, "Gone to prepare for tonight's festivities..."

They followed the cracked asphalt, struggling to ignore the sickness that surrounded them. The road stretched for miles without a single side road branching off. A whole city like a dash. Hours seemed to pass. Her limbs grew tired.

"It seems to take half a day to wander from one end of the city to the other," Adolf said to Mus. “The layout of the city is extremely illogical. You always manage to disgust me.”

"Yes," Mus said. "They have turned their entire civilization to irritate you."

Adolf's face frowned roughly at her, and she smiled. Finally the road ended and the bridge began: a gigantic wooden extension shaped like a dragonfly. It stretched so far into the distance that he couldn't see the end.

Somewhere out there must be _____burg where the Golden Eel lives, thought Adolf.

"We have to go under the bridge," Adolf said to Mus.

"I know," Mus replied.

"That's where the high priest lives."

Mus nodded.

"I will find him."

Mus nodded.

"I'll find a way home." Mus nodded.

Ms. Preppy

The house was not on the ground as Adolf had imagined. There didn't even seem to be any ground under the bridge, just a swirl of color that might have been clouds or perhaps a distorted landscape far below. So the high priest's house was not on the ground but in the air
– it hung on a string from the bridge. They marched quite a distance down the dragonfly's back to a hole that led down into the roof of the house, which swayed in the breeze.

"It seems to be deserted," Adolf said to Mus, shuddering.

She stared down at the colorful gasses. "Do you
want to stay up here?" asked Adolf. Her mind
spun like a spindle. "Stay here," he ordered.
She stroked her hair.

Hitler climbed down the cord until he was uncertain on the swaying tin house. He struggled to steady himself, but felt dizzy again, this time from the sight of the swirling colors in the sky. The colors emanated from what appeared to be clouds splattered with different colors. The god of this world did not seem to be as good an artist as Hitler's god.

A trapdoor waited at his feet. A salty smell wafted from the room below as he opened the hatch and leapt through the entryway into the tumbling house.

The smell hit his nostrils: a strong, brain-melting smell of sea salt. The intensity brought tears to Hitler's eyes. He had to put a hand in front of his nose as he looked around. The room was small

and crammed with metal furniture covered in a film of tar and liquids.

"Is anyone here?" Hitler shouted. "Maybe Ms. Adrett?"

He walked into the room next door—a jumble of black-stained chairs and dressers—and called for Mrs. Adrett, keeping his nose from getting salty.

Adolf heard breathing and knocking noises as he turned a corner and entered a new room.

"Ah, Herr Hitler," said a voice. "I'm glad you made it."

Hitler turned and eyebrowed at Roger, the noseless man who was leading them to _____stadt
had. He stood in front of a black sticky chest and poured salt on snails.

"Are you the high priest?" Adolf asked the noseless man.

"Yes," said the noseless man. "Didn't I tell you that? That's why I had to leave so quickly. The high priest is the most important person in the ceremony tonight. Oh, by the way, where's your wife? Did you have her put down?"

"No, she's waiting outside."

"I wouldn't leave her out alone for too long. Someone could confiscate her or steal her or she could run away."

"I doubt she'll run away," Adolf said.

"Ah, so you trained her that well?" asked the noseless man.

"She only has me."

The noseless man roared with laughter and sprinkled more salt on his snail collection.

'Why did you come to me, Herr Hitler?' 'I was told that Frau Adrett lives here. I need
Your help."

"Nice?" He smirked again. "You came to talk to her?"

"Yes," said Adolf. "The landlord said she could help me find my briefcase, which I need to track down the imperfect man."

"Well, I can't comment on that, but you're welcome to talk to her if you'd like."

"Yes, please," said Adolf. "It's important to national security."

The noseless man chewed his tongue and led Adolf into another room with a window and velvet curtains that fell to the floor and reached over him, up another wall, and halfway to the ceiling. A large turtle terrarium stood in the middle of the room.

"I'll be in the room next door if you need me," the noseless man said. "My work is never done."

Adolf was alone in the room. There was no sign of Frau Adrett.

"Frau Adrett?" But he received no answer.

The sky outside on the other side of the window was a gentle purple swirl and seemed to be lit with lightning. Adolf wondered if it was raining. He wondered if Mus could get soaked or even sick out there.

He went to the terrarium. There was a turtle in the glass container. Something was wrong with her. The turtle's carapace wasn't shaped the way he found normal. This turtle's shell was different, deformed. It resembled a turtle shell in color and pattern, but its shape was more like that of a wheeled race car and all that entails.

"Frau Adrett?" Adolf called again, patting the racing car armor.

She must have been sleeping. He knocked again and her human head popped out...a wrinkled, tiny, bald human head. Her human feet slid out through the race car wheels and she yawned.

“Are you Frau Adrett?” asked Adolf.

She pecked at crickets and meat sausage.

"Mrs. Adrett?"

The house rocked back and forth, making Adolf feel sick in the pit of his stomach.

"I'm Mrs. Adrett," the turtle confirmed, while chewing on earwigs and a pear. Her shriveled papier-mâché limbs wriggled like worms. "Have you come to hear my stories?"

"I came for another reason," Adolf said to the turtle.

'I've lived so long. I have so many stories to tell."

"I apologize for my impatience, Ms. Adrett, but I am on a mission of the utmost importance and have neither the time nor the inclination to listen to stories." Spidery green patterns crawled across the sky, causing him to stutter. “I'm looking for a man who poses a threat to humanity. An imperfect man.”

"Imperfect?" asked the tortoise. "In what way?"

"I don't know exactly," said Adolf. “I can't remember his face, but it's imperfect. He's a plague, and I'm here to rid society of him. He led me into this world of diseased genes and anti-normality. They said you could help me."

The turtle spattered gray slime onto its cracked bark floor.

"I'm just a tortoise," said the tortoise. “People rarely cross my path. Even if I had seen the man you are looking for, defining him as *imperfect* still gives me no idea by him. All humans are imperfect. You must describe him to me, I may have seen him.”

Adolf rolled his eyes. "I have a photo of this man in my briefcase, but I can't find the briefcase."

The turtle paused and bathed in the window light, closing its eyes tightly.
"She probably went to where objects go," she said.
"Where do objects go?" Adolf asked the turtle.

»All objects are alive. Even the ones you don't believe. Sometimes when you're not looking, objects stand up and begin their journey. They often end up in a land of *things* where all non-animated objects are free to move. Your briefcase might have found a home there.”
"Where is this place for living things?" he asked the turtle.
"I'm just a tortoise," replied the tortoise. “I don't know these things. You should ask the Golden Eel. He knows a lot.'
'I find your answer a little hopeful,' he said to the turtle, 'but also hideously ridiculous. The idea of a land where objects are alive is even more absurd than the race car armor on your back. She's even more absurd than your high priest without a nose. It's even more absurd than this house hanging by a string."

"Do you have somewhere to stay?" asked the tortoise.

“No, I just arrived in _____town. I

I haven't tried to find a temporary home yet. Though it might be important to find one as I'm going to marry Mus tonight.'

"You must remain as our guests in the high priest's house."

"That's a very kind offer," said Adolf to the turtle, "but I feel very uncomfortable in this house. I wouldn't even allow Mus to come down here to me."

'You don't need to worry. It's safer here than in the city."

"Why isn't it safe in the city?"

"People disappear in the night," said the tortoise. 'They are being mysteriously taken away. No one knows exactly why they are being taken or by whom. No, it's not at all safe in the city."

"Everything is so disorganized here that I'm not surprised that things like this happen," Adolf said to the turtle. "They have no control over the population, the environment, or even themselves. In a situation like this, people are bound to die and disappear."

"Your heart does not utter these words," said the tortoise. "Just your mouth."

"You are a confused little creature," he said to the turtle.

'No one else will offer you a place to stay, Herr Hitler. This is your only home if you don't want to risk disappearing too. Think of your wife if you don't want to think of yourself."

"She's not my wife yet," he told the tortoise.

They were silent and stared at the light coming in through the window. It had darkened from a pink to a hot crimson.

"You will stay here, Adolf Hitler," said the tortoise.

"I'm *not* Adolf Hitler," he said to the turtle.

"You will stay here, Herr Hitler," she hissed like a frightening evil doll.

Father Noseless

As he left Frau Adrett's room, Adolf's feet slipped and he fell into a puddle of black slime, smearing his pants and elbows with molten snails.

"Oh, Herr Hitler!" cried the noseless high priest as he ran into the room to help him up off the wet floor. "You need to get rid of that uniform and put on something clean."

"I don't have anything clean," Adolf said. "And your clothes are too disgusting for me to wear."

"Oh, but you must," said the noseless high priest. 'You can't wear black clothes to a wedding ceremony. That's bad luck.«

"Only primitives believe in good and bad luck," Adolf said to the noseless high priest.

"Strange," said the noseless high priest. “I was taught that only primitives don't believe in good and bad luck. Please take off your clothes.”

Adolf groaned at him. "Because of me."

"Here, put this on," said the noseless man, handing Adolf a yellow robe. "This will suit you much better than that awful uniform."

"Should my wife wear something else?" Adolf asked the noseless man.

"Women don't wear dresses at the ceremony."

"It is detrimental to a woman's dignity to display her naked body in public."

"I find it quite ridiculous that a man your age should treat his wife like a human being."

"She's a human being," Adolf said.

The noseless man laughed out loud. "Don't spread the word."

Adolf pulled the robe over his dirty uniform and tied it up. The high priest's expression told him he disapproved of Adolf's keeping his uniform on under his robes, but he didn't object.

“When does it start?” Adolf asked.

"Soon." The priest's mood turned to gloomy. "I can feel the night drawing near."

As Adolf climbed the ladder to the skylight in the High Priest's house, the atmosphere assailed him, a rich blood red streaked with yellow and black. Even the wind turned crimson as it attacked his hair.

"What's up with the sky?" Adolf asked the noseless man. He had to yell to drown out the loud breeze.

"The night bleeds in," revealed the noseless man. The tin house swayed violently in the wind as they
Climbed line to dragonfly/bridge. Mus stood there, staring at the emptiness below. In the red wind her clothes fluttered around her wasp waist like flickering flames.

"Mus," Adolf called to her, but she didn't turn to him. "It is time."

"Women don't obey when treated as equals," said the noseless man.

"Come on, Mus," called Adolf.

She turned to Hitler. Her facial expression betrayed drowsiness and absent-mindedness.

The noseless man went to her. "Come on, woman!"

Mus went to Hitler, smiled at him and touched his chin.
Then they made their way back to town.

Walking the giant, crispy dragonfly was like walking in a dream. The shades of color shifted back and forth, and the ground contorted when his feet touched it.

"I feel strange," Adolf said to the noseless high priest.

"Of course," said the noseless high priest. “The atmosphere is artificial, made of chemicals. The night is made of chemicals that are intoxicating when inhaled.”

“You mean I was drugged against my will?” asked Adolf Hitler.

"The only way to break the intoxication is to stop breathing," said the noseless high priest.

"Who created this atmosphere?" Adolf asked the noseless high priest.

“The Emperor, of course, the Golden Eel. He thinks having a night is worth the side effects.”

"I'm not surprised at his eccentricities, but I hate the feeling of not being in control."

When they finally entered the city, Adolf felt like he was breathing through his pores, through his eyeballs, through his ears, through his toenails, through his fingertips, through his hair and through his privates, as if he were made up of a collection of lungs, those given a human form.

The city looked completely different at night. The buildings were coated in a thick tarry substance that resembled the melted snail slime on his uniform. They gave off an odor that the wind carried across the street to invade Adolf's senses.

"We must hurry," said the noseless high priest. "People disappear in the night."

Halfway into the sodden town, they left the road and turned into the cornfields.

A group of robed men had gathered at the edge of the fields, many in yellow robes like those worn by Hitler, some also in red and white. The crowd stared at them in silence, as if they were the main performers of the ceremony.

"Stand over there," said the noseless high priest, pointing to a line of yellow-robed men.

Adolf took his place at the end of the line. Mus didn't follow him. The noseless High Priest whispered something in her ear, almost kissing it, and caressed her earlobe with the bloody noseless region of his face. He then stripped off her clothes, exposing her complete nudity in front of the drooling mutants. He took her by the hand and led her through some tall bushes until they were out of sight.

When the noseless man returned he was alone. Mud covered his sleeves, his hands clasped in a knot. Next to Adolf, a large male warthog snorted and licked his snot-smeared nose with his thick gray tongue. Its smell was like the diarrhea of a diseased ostrich. On Adolf's other side stood a black hairy creature that appeared to be a cross between an obese tarantula and a huge deformed vagina with five cat tails instead of arms. Both horrible, smelly creatures that Adolf felt should be forbidden to come within a kilometer of him, but Adolf decided to move a little closer to the Warthog Man because he bore at least some resemblance to a human being . Adolf turned a little so that he could turn his backside to the tarantula vagina. The warthog man saw Adolf getting closer and grunted. Before he had a chance to think better of it, Adolf opened his mouth and spoke to him.

"How does that work?" Adolf asked the warthog man.

The warthog man grunted.

"What's happening now? What is expected of us?” The warthog man grunted.

"The whole situation is ridiculous," he said to the warthog man.

"She's unnatural," grunted the warthog man. "Yes!" Adolf called to the warthog man. "I am totally your opinion! She is unnatural!”

Adolf smiled and looked at the nasty creature. She grunted and licked her snot-smeared nose with her thick gray tongue.

At that moment, Adolf felt dizzy. He could feel rough/vibrating textures in the air as he breathed. The people around him suddenly looked grainy. The scent of the creatures tickled his brain, which began to itch. A flame danced through the air like a lava fairy.

Then Adolf shook his head and became a little more sober. The fire came from a torch carried by the noseless high priest as he approached the crowd of yellow-robed men. There was silence all around him. The ceremony was about to begin...

'My dear bridegrooms,' said the noseless man, 'today you will profess the tribulation called marriage. On behalf of all residents of _____city we congratulate you on this sacrifice. So disgusting as it may be, marriage is important to our civilization. Without marriage, there would be no way for our species to proliferate. You are heroes, every single one of you. Your suffering ensures a future for our people. As tradition dictates, we recommend euthanizing your wife after the first litter. With our current technology, women are no longer needed in the infancy stages after childbirth, and it would be just cruel to the children to keep the woman with them. As we know, children often become very attached to their mothers because they don't know any better. You should

don't let her. So please schedule the woman right after the birth.”

The noseless High Priest motioned to a group of red-robed Lobstermen who approached a row of crates full of pet collars.

"The ceremony proceeds as follows," continued the noseless high priest. “Each of you gets a collar. This is your wedding ring. As soon as you put the wedding ring on your wife, you are bound by the bonds of marriage. But first you must find your wife. All the brides were hidden in the field. Once you have found your wife, you put the wedding ring around her neck and mate with her. After that there is no turning back. After mating, you are legally required to remain married to your wife until she has at least littered. If your wife proves unable to give birth, you may exchange her for a new one.”

Adolf was given a collar. A little big for Mus, made more for a horse. The warthog man next to him seemed particularly perplexed by the size of his collar. His seemed to have been made for a woman the size of a cat.

“Following the ceremony,” continued the noseless high priest, “there will be a feast and celebration in honor of you brave men. As you all know, it is traditional for one of the brides to be served as the main course of the feast. This dinner bride, as we call her, is always the last woman to be married. The dinner bride's groom is dishonored and sent home. So if you don't want to be known as a traitor and a coward, you better not be the last to find your wife."

Adolf's heart was pumping frantically. His hands were shaking. He couldn't believe what the ugly priest had said.

Did he really say we're eating the loser's wife? Does that mean that Mus, the most perfect woman in the world, could be eaten by those horrid creatures if I find her last?

The blood rushed through his body in time with Adolf's heartbeat and he could feel the effect of the drug increasing. His field of vision blurred a little. The warthog man next to him made a few noises in his ear, but Adolf didn't know if he was just snorting or trying to communicate something.

How am I supposed to find Mus in my current state?

"When this torch falls to the ground," continued the noseless high priest, "you can begin the hunt."

Adolf laughed at the fire of the torch as the priest raised it high over his head.

"Begin," the noseless high priest demanded.

Adolf grimaced at the fire as it laughed and taunted him. He couldn't understand what it was saying to him, but its sizzling words angered him.

After a few minutes, Adolf realized that the torch had long since fallen to the ground and the other grooms were rushing off in all directions. He just stood there, alone with the priests, staring at the torch on the floor.

Mrs Pig

Adolf ran into the field after the other grooms. His steps were like violet pulp. He seemed to be moving in slow motion. White light crackled at the edges of his vision. As he sprinted aimlessly through the patches of yellow mushrooms, he could see little but blurred textures ahead.

The other bridegrooms seemed to find their prey quickly. Adolf passed several pairs of mutants copulating in the dripping bushes or behind the mossy rocks. Everywhere he went he found grooms and their wives staring at him and giggling to themselves.

Or are they not real? hallucinations? If the artificial night creates this disgusting, mind-shattering state, why do I seem to be the only one affected? Has everyone else gotten used to it? Or are their degenerate minds so inherently deranged that they can no longer tell the difference between this and normality?

Adolf kept looking for what seemed like an hour. He couldn't spot a bride without a bridegroom, let alone Mus. He had lost. Surely his mus would be killed by those creatures. And his mind felt so gritty-sick he couldn't do anything about it.

Out of pyramid-shaped patterns, the warthog man suddenly emerged and collided with him. They fell on top of each other and smacked into the slimy yellow mold on the floor.

"Where's my wife?" Adolf thought he heard the warthog man say.

His brain had trouble understanding speech.

"I don't know," Adolf might have said. "What does she look like?"

"Like a pig," Adolf thought he heard the warthog man say.

"Have you seen my wife?" Adolf may have asked the warthog man.

"What does she look like?" Adolf thought he heard the warthog asking.

"She looks perfect."

It was then that Adolf realized that all was not lost. This mutant hadn't found his mutant wife yet, so he wasn't set to be the final groom. He wondered if they were the last ones left, fighting for the penultimate spot. As long as the warthog man didn't find his wife first, Adolf Mus could still save her.

The look on the warthog man's face told young Hitler that he thought the same. Before the warthog could react, Adolf grabbed the collar from his hand and threw it over his shoulder into a mud puddle. Cartoonishly, his own face expanded into a screeching thundercloud and threw Adolf to the ground.

In return, the Warthog Man snatched Adolf's collar and threw it over a purple hedge before throwing himself in the mud to retrieve his collar. Adolf heard snorts and squeaks behind him as he jumped after his collar and over the hedge onto the lap of a huge ball of bacon.

It wasn't a ball of bacon, but a naked woman. A pig woman. She had caught Adolf's collar as it flew over the hedge and thanked heaven as the younger man landed on top of her. She waited for Adolf to put the collar on her, kissed his neck with her wet muzzle and rubbed her six breasts on his shoulder. She was huge. Twice the size of Mus.

Probably even bigger than the warthog man who was obviously supposed to be her groom.

Adolf took the collar off the pig woman and she lifted her neck so he could put it on her, but Adolf crawled off her. Before he could get away, she lunged at him with all her greasy bacon strength.

"Please, please," Adolf thought he heard the pig woman call. "I do not wanna die."

"Get off me, you big lump!" Adolf might have said to the pig woman.

»Bütteeee...«, sobbed the pig woman in his yellow robe. 'I'll be a good wife too. I give you lots of children. Don't let them eat me. Please don't let me die."

Their piggy eyes widened as they looked at Adolf. They watered down her cheeks and onto his chest. Maybe it was the drugs, but Adolf was starting to feel sorry for her. Sure, she was a terribly disgusting creature, but she didn't seem to deserve death.

"All right," Adolf thought he was telling the pig woman. "I'll put the collar on you."

The pig woman's mouth opened wide with excitement. She pressed him to her fat breasts and licked him with her thick, smelly tongue. After getting off him, she leaned forward, bowed her head and closed her eyes while Adolf undid the collar. But he didn't put it on her. He dropped it. And before she could hear it fall to the ground, Adolf put his arm around her neck and snapped her disfigured neck.

Her massive body went limp. Adolf picked up his wedding ring, covered them with purple vegetation and kept walking. As he left them, he could hear the warthog man crying, desperately trying to find his collar in the mud.

Mus was safe now. The warthog man would be served last and the pig woman as a feast to these freaks. All Adolf had to do now was find his perfect wife.

But Adolf couldn't find her. she found him. Adolf was walking through a forest of crab legs when she came up behind him and wrapped her slender arms around him. She bent his body back and kissed him extensively. He put the collar on her and she pulled him onto a bed of soft moss. As they made love, the effects of the drugs on Hitler's metabolism intensified and everything around him became a blur. His senses melted together. He could smell the warmth of her skin. He could taste her sweat through his fingertips.

When Adolf came, his brain turned into a metallic liquid that rushed through his lungs and dripped from his nipples into Mus's mouth. His thoughts floated down her throat as their bodies pressed together as tightly as they could.

PART THREE:
The Queen of the Eels

Mr. and Mrs. Hitler

To the young Adolf Hitler it seemed as if he had slept for decades. He awoke to his new wife's face surrounded by black hairy blankets. He was lying in a bed somewhere. The lighting was sparse. Mus had his eyes open and was staring at her husband as if she had been lying there just waiting for him to wake up.

"You slept late," she said.

He was plagued by a pounding headache, almost like a hangover. It was probably a consequence of the drug in the artificial atmosphere. Adolf pulled back the covers and looked around the room. It was tiny, more like a shack. Everything was made of black painted metal. There was just enough space for a small bed and a toilet. Adolf released his naked body from the mush and stood up. She was also naked except for her marriage collar. The room rocked slightly as he urinated into the bowl. The movement made him nauseous. He realized they were in the noseless high priest's house, which dangled from the bridge. The toilet bowl had a hole in the bottom that opened up into a huge chasm below them.

"I have a confession to make," Mus said.

Adolf crawled back into bed. When he touched Mus' skin, it felt cold. As cold as a corpse.

"I'm sorry, but I lied to you..." Mus said.

Adolf pulled away from her unnaturally cold skin.

Her face changed. A white figure detached itself from her body to touch him.

"It's really me, Elsie," said the white figure.

Mrs. Rad's daughter, the ghost girl. It was in Adolf's perfect wife.

"What kind of infamy is this?" Adolf asked the ghost girl.

"I wanted to be with you and knew that this is the only way you could love me back."

Adolf's mouth widened in shock.

"But we're married now," she said. "It's important for married people to be honest with each other if a marriage is to work."

She took him in her arms. Adolf shuddered in her dead embrace and tried to hold back four angry tears.

Mrs. Manti-Maleon

Adolf pushed the ghost girl away and looked for Mus. Behind Elsie, a black creature lay on the bed where Mus had lain before. A large female creature with skin like a cockroach's shell.

"What's that?" Adolf called to the ghost girl and jumped to the farthest corner of the room.

Elsie got up and walked over to him, raising her arms to calm him down.

“In order to transform myself into your perfect wife, I had to possess a manti maleon. It's a creature that could be described as a cross between a praying mantis and a chameleon.” Adolf studied the sleeping creature more closely. She bore a close resemblance to a mantis in the form of a woman, but was the size of a gorilla and covered with long tufts of black hair.

"It's a monster!" said Adolf to the ghost girl.

"It's safe for now," said the ghost girl. "It sleeps."

"It's against nature!" said Adolf to the ghost girl.

'But if it wakes up, it will be dangerous. Humans are one of the main food sources for manti eleons, along with deer, cattle, and large dogs. They have the ability to change their physical appearance to look like their prey's perfect mate."

"It's an outrageous spectacle of disgust!" said Adolf to the ghost girl.

“They are able to lure their prey, lure them into dropping their guard, and kill and

then eat them. I have decided to possess one of these beings in order to look like your perfect mate."

"You could never be my perfect partner!" said Adolf.

"But in the Manti-Maleon I look like your perfect mate."

"I would never mate with you," Adolf said.

"We mated last night," said the ghost girl.

"But you're a ghost girl," Adolf said to the ghost girl. “We can't really mate. Your dead womb can never bring forth my offspring."

"That's right," Elsie said softly, trying not to scowl. “I wouldn't be able to do that as a ghost. But in this body I can. In fact, we already have.”

"I mated with this *thing* !" said Adolf.

"I'll show you," said the ghost girl.

She went to the door, opened it and let in two black creatures.

"Dad!" the creatures cried, running across the room toward him.

Adolf screamed and jumped on the toilet seat. "What are these creatures?"

"Dad, Daddy," the creatures cried as they swarmed around the toilet bowl.

They tried to grab his legs, but he kicked them off.

"These are your children," said the ghost girl. "Impossible!" said

Adolf. 'It's a terrible trick!

This whole place is a terrible trick!”

"I didn't know manti eleons could mate with humans," she said, "but last night I gave birth to a child for both times we made love."

"We made love twice?"

"First at the ceremony, then again after the festivities."

“After what festivities?” said Adolf, cringing as one of the creatures pressed its cheek against his foot.

“You were barely conscious during the feast. You didn't even want to eat some of the pork on a skewer."

Adolf threw a blanket over their black heads and stormed out of the room, slamming the door behind him and keeping it closed.

The ghost girl went through the wall and continued talking to him. “After mating, manti eleons give birth within a few hours. I went through two pregnancies last night and gave birth twice while you were sleeping. Baby manti eleons grow very quickly. They only need a few days to grow up.”

She watched Adolf desperately keeping the door shut to keep the creatures locked inside the room.

"Let them out," she said. "They are our children."

"They are not your children," said Adolf. "They are the children of this creature."

The woman laid her cold hands on his arms.

"I'll still love them as if they were my own," said the ghost girl.

Ms Stock and Mr Kamm

After an hour, Elsie had calmed Adolf down enough to let the children in.

"Hello, papa," the male child said as he walked past him into the kitchen.

"I love you, papa," said the female child with her plump, hairy face.

They were no longer interested in attacking Adolf with their love. They were only interested in having breakfast.

"Aren't they gorgeous?" asked Elsie.

"Not in the least," said Adolf.

The kitchen was a small room full of larger tar blocks that could be used as tables and chairs. There was also an old black stove and a set of lockers that served as a closet. A refrigerator was missing, but dried and preserved foods were piled in the lockers. An inspection revealed: cans of artichokes, cans of spinach, cans of meat, cans of pasta, cans of hot dogs, cans of chocolate, cans of bread, cans of mustard, cans of fish, cans of salad, and cans of rainbow jelly.

"I'm the mother, I should cook," Frau Hitler said to Adolf as she pushed him out of the kitchen. Elsie merged back into the creature's body and then assumed the form of his perfect wife while he rummaged through the lockers. 'Sit down at the table. Familiarize yourself with your children."

She assigned one of the tar blocks to Adolf to face the two creatures. The girl creature appeared much thinner than the boy creature. Her torso resembled a stick, like that of a praying mantis. The boy was chubby and had a reptilian crest on his head.

They're both awful, thought Adolf.

"Father Eyebrows said we could have the house to ourselves for a while if we took care of Mrs. Adrett."

Adolf responded with a shrug. The children stared at him and studied his features. Opening and closing their nostrils and blinking lazily. Adolf stared back. They didn't speak to each other.

They are the most disgusting creatures I have ever seen. The idea that they are my children is absolutely ridiculous. The ghost girl must have brought these creatures into my life to make me believe I had children to keep me trapped in this marriage forever. But I have no obligation to these children. I am not responsible for them. It's just animals.

"I don't like her," said Adolf.

"How can you say something like that about your children?" said Frau Hitler. "And practically in their faces!"

“They are perversities. They are disgusting and offensive to my genes.”

"You will learn to love her," she said.

"I won't do anything of the sort," Adolf said.

The children did not follow their exchange. They continued to stare at their father with black insect eyes.

Elsie brought them plates of food. She'd made hot dogs and put them on canned bread with mustard and rainbow jelly. The meat tasted bland and the bread reminded him of a soggy cake, but Adolf was so hungry that within minutes he had eaten it all. He was surprised that he really liked the taste of the jelly mixed with the strong mustard, but the rest was just an odd, tasteless texture.

The kids turned into hot dogs before eating their hot dogs. Adolf's jaw dropped, but Elsie just smiled from her chair like it was the cutest thing

of the world. Adolf couldn't look away anymore when hot dogs the size of children ate the small hot dogs.

"You have to take me to the pet shop today to get me registered," Elsie said.

"You can go alone," Adolf replied. "I have to go to _____Castle."

"But I can't go alone," she said.

"Then don't go at all."

"But then they'll put me to sleep!"

“No, they will put the creature you possessed to sleep. you are a ghost You can't die."

Elsie's eyes filled with tears. Nothing upset her more than when someone called her a ghost.

"But I want to stay in this body," Elsie cried. »I want to be your perfect partner.«

"Fine, we're leaving right after breakfast, but after that we're going straight to the castle, and these little creatures can't come with us."

"Oh, mennoooo..." the hot dogs wailed.

Mister Warthog

Young Adolf quickly pulled his leashed wife through the busy, muddy streets of _____town
hoping to get their registration over with as soon as possible. The townspeople vomited yellow syrup into the gutters. Every ten feet some creature seemed to be vomiting yellow goo into something, as if the whole town had just eaten the same spoiled food. Hitler was relieved that he was wearing his yellow ceremonial robe over his uniform.

"I have a lot to do before night falls," Adolf said to his wife. “I have to find a way to _____burg
enter so I can talk to the golden eel so he can tell me where to find the place the items go to so I can find my briefcase so I can get the image of the imperfect man so I can find him and erase, and then find a way to get back to my normal size so I can leave this place forever."

"But what will become of me?" his wife asked. "You're not going to leave me, are you? And the children?'

“I have a duty to my nation. I cannot stay in this world."

"Can I come with you?" his wife asked. "Most likely not, I don't think so..."

Adolf answered his wife, but was interrupted by an angry snarling roar behind him.

He turned to see the hulking warthog man from last night taking Adolf's little wife in his hairy, fat arms, grabbing her by the throat and snarling at Adolf, eyes sparkling with anger.

"You killed my perfect wife," cried the warthog man. Before Adolf could react, the warthog man snapped his wife's neck and threw the body on the ground between them. The ghost girl left the corpse, frightened and confused. When the warthog man saw Elsie, he grabbed the ghost by the neck and snapped his head as well. Elsie's head just snapped back again. He lifted her up into the air and threw her against a wall, but she only flew through without taking damage.

"Your wife can't die?" yelled the warthog man. "Then I'll kill *you.* «

The boar charged the officer. Though Adolf considered himself a seasoned expert in hand-to-hand combat, his memory still seemed too blank to recall maneuvers that would help fend off the warthog male charging at him. He just stood there and searched his memory while the warthog man jumped at him, throwing him to the ground and brandishing a fist the size of a cinder block.

Adolf lay in a puddle of muddy yellow vomit. His robe was wrapped around his neck. The warthog staggered and froze in the middle of his attack. He had noticed something about Adolf that he hadn't noticed before. His uniform, he recognized it. Then Adolf noticed it too. The warthog man also wore a Nazi uniform.

Mutant beings stared at them as they both lay on the street and looked at each other, mouths wide open in amazement.

"Who are you?" asked the warthog man.

"I don't know," said Adolf to the warthog man. 'I only recently arrived, but I've lost my memory. People here call me Adolf Hitler because it says Adolf Hitler on my uniform."

"I've lost my memory too," said the warthog man, pulling them out of the mud and wiping the vomit from their Nazi uniforms. “Adolf Hitler is also written on my uniform. I came here to find an imperfect man."

"Imperfect? In what way?” Adolf asked the warthog man.
"I'm not sure," said the warthog man. “I can't remember his face, but he's imperfect. It is a plague and I am here to rid society of it.”
"Just like me!" said Adolf to the warthog man. "My mission is to find and destroy the last imperfect man."
"But you're so imperfect yourself," said the warthog man. "How can a creature as absurd as you know anything about perfection?"
"I? Imperfect? I am the definition of perfection!«

"No, I am the definition of perfection!" said the warthog man.
"You're a nasty ogre of a man," Adolf said to the warthog man.
"You're a slight, bony elf of a man," said the warthog man.
"How is that possible?" Adolf asked the warthog man. "How can we have the same assignment?"

"Hmm..." The warthog man scratched the hair on his chin. »I had a partner when I started this journey. Perhaps you are my partner?'
"Yes, I had a partner too."
"What did your partner look like?" asked the warthog man.

"I don't know, but I'm pretty sure he was as perfect as I was."

"Perhaps you are my partner," repeated the warthog man. "But this strange world we live in has mutated you in a hideous way."

"Yes, that's the way it has to be," said Adolf to the warthog man. "Except that you're the one who hideously mutated, not me."

The warthog man shook his head but didn't discuss the matter further.

“Then we must join forces. We can pool our resources and share information. Together we will find the imperfect man and bring him down once and for all!«

Adolf smiled and shook the fat mutant's hand. Out of the corner of his eye, Adolf saw that Elsie was trying to return to the dead mantieleon, to possess it again and make it move... but the flesh was dead. She could no longer assume the form of the perfect woman .

"Let's go have a drink," suggested the warthog man.

Adolf nodded and snapped his fingers for the ghost girl to get out of the mud and follow them.

Mr partner

The ghost girl wailed that her children would no longer accept her as a mother outside of the manti meleon's body as they entered the tavern and sat down at the table closest to the counter. Herr Wirt greeted them with a "Sieg Heil" and placed two milky-brown drinks in front of them before they had a chance to order anything.

"All I can remember is waking up in a huge web and with very little memory of my past life," the warthog man snorted. “After a few hours I climbed down the net and found houses and buildings surrounding me. People lived in the huge spider web. I was welcomed into the house of a disgusting cripple and I told him what I think should be done with cripples. He told me their net community is called _____village. they entertained

a textile mill on the web that harvested spider threads for clothes and curtains and things like that. Eventually I was able to leave the place and was directed here to _____town. I find it even more horrifying and absurd than in _____village, but I figured it was a good one Starting point for the search for the imperfect man.«

"And has your search borne fruit?" Adolf asked the warthog man.

"Not really," grunted the warthog man. 'But I've interviewed a lot of people. They said a stranger was in town recently who claimed to be on the run from the government. I'm sure this is our man. But nobody has seen him lately. He slept on the street and is supposed to close easily

have been find. I have a feeling he's been kidnapped."

"Kidnapped?"

»Here it often happens that people simply disappear from the street at night. There are rumors that they are being kidnapped and taken to the castle by minions of the Golden Eel."

"Footmen?"

"The Golden Eel is said to be a cruel scientist who conducts experiments on the citizens he has kidnapped."

"So you think the Imperfect Man is being held prisoner somewhere in the Castle of the Golden Eel?"

'Yes, we must go there and look around. There is supposed to be a ball there tonight. I know I can get invites, but we need to find dates."

"Women?"

'Yes, and there are very few women in town. We can buy some at the pet store I suppose. If only you hadn't killed my perfect wife..."

"She was a pig!"

"She was my love! Better than your walking corpse of a woman."

'Although she is far more attractive than your pig, this ghost woman is definitely a perversion. I would prefer not to take her to the ball as my date."

"And if I go as your perfect wife?" asked the ghost girl. "I can possess one of the children and transform back into them."

"That might work," Adolf said to the ghost girl.

"And I could persuade the other child to turn into a pig woman for you," she said to the warthog man.

"It's not a real date," the warthog man snorted at the ghost girl, "so I'm fine with it. If these children, as you call them, have the ability to shapeshift, they might be of some use in our mission."

They sent Elsie back home to prepare the kids for the evening ball while Adolf and his warthog partner tried to match their memories. They found that they both remembered the same details about their mission, but neither knew too much about his past or what the imperfect man looked like.

"I'd really like to know who this Adolf Hitler actually is," Adolf said to the warthog man.

"Yes, it's on my uniform too," said the warthog man.

"Did he design the uniform?"

"Or is he our commanding officer?"

"Are you sure it's not a nametag?" asked the warthog man. "Are you sure you're not Adolf Hitler?"

"But then you would have exactly the same name tag." "Then I'm Adolf Hitler too."

"We should both have the same first and last name?"

"I dont know. Conceivable."

"That's ridiculous."

"Or where we come from, everyone's name is Adolf Hitler."

"Grotesque!"

"Speaking of grotesque," said the warthog man, drooling sideways from his blackish warthog snout, "what do you think of this place we're in now?"

"He should be erased!" said Adolf to the warthog man.

"By stormtroopers!" said the warthog man.

"Through Blitzkrieg!"

"By rockets!"

"By neutron bombs!"

'But,' the warthog man began, 'how do you think this place can exist? Where is he from? Why haven't we heard from him before?”

"I don't know," said Adolf to the warthog man. "It must be pretty well hidden."

"I think it was created by nature." "Nature?"

"The outside world is absolutely perfect," said the warthog man. “In every way she is total perfection. But the universe is all about balance. Good and evil, matter and energy, perfection and imperfection... To have perfection there must be an equal amount of imperfection.”

"Blasphemy!" said the young Adolf Hitler.

"This one little town of utter imperfection and total chaos exists as a counterweight to the sheer perfection of the rest of the world."

"Absurd!" said Adolf to the warthog man. »Perfection cannot coexist with imperfection. As long as there is even a spark of imperfection, there is no perfection. In order to attain perfection, all faults must be erased!”

"But then how do you explain this town?" asked the warthog man. "If we are so perfect, how could we create a place like this?"

Adolf banged his fist on the table and knocked over their glasses. He had nothing to say, but he still would have ranted on about the absurdity of this ugly place and the ugliness of its people. But then he noticed all the mutated bug eyes staring at him from every corner of the room.

Mr. Siamese

Just before dusk, after Hitler and Herr Warthog had cleaned their uniforms and procured four fake invitations to the ball from a tall, foul-smelling man with lizard arms and a beak, they met Elsie and the children in the middle of the Dragonfly Bridge . The children were now teenagers.

"Hello dad," said the teenager with the comb.

"Hello papa," said the stick girl, waving.

The warthog man scowled at Adolf
expression because he gave him the presence of this hideous creatures.

"They're growing up really fast, aren't they?" asked the ghost girl.

Adolf returned the scowl of the warthog man.

"I told them I was their aunt," said Elsie. "I didn't know what else to say to them."

"These are our dates?" The warthog Nazi dropped his eyes in horror.

"You're supposed to transform yourself," said Adolf to the warthog man.

Elsie snapped her ghostly white fingers at the creatures.

"Do as I showed you."

Both creatures changed shape and looked like the perfect mates of men in elegant evening dresses. Mr. Warthog's partner looked almost exactly like the pig woman who had died the night before.

"You're back!" Mr. Warthog shouted at the pig woman.

He ran to her, hugged her and licked her cheek. The pig woman nodded at him.

"I can't kiss you or anything," the ghost girl said to Adolf as she entered his perfect mate's body. “After all, I'm in your daughter's body. That would be funny.«

"Perfectly acceptable," Adolf said.

She gave Adolf a quick hug and complimented his clean, shiny uniform. The four took each other's hands and practiced elegant ballroom steps as they walked across the Dragonfly Bridge to the Castle of the Golden Eel.

They marched for an hour but had not yet reached the end. The bridge was so long that they couldn't see either end for a while. They only saw the bridge and the pink-blue swirling void around them. They met no one on the bridge. While they believed other people must have taken the bridge to get to the ball, they did not see any. They wondered if they might be late or early.

"It's kind of lonely out here," Adolf said to the others.

The others agreed.

"Absurd and lonely," said Mr. Warthog.

"It never ends," Mus said.

When finally a good kilometer further _____-burg in
When sight came, they all sighed with relief. The castle was huge, like a mountain. It was still a few kilometers away, but it was obvious that the castle must be twice the size of the whole of _____town.

The architecture appeared chaotic and irregular. As if the castle had been built at random and without prior planning. The towers twisted like goat horns, there were steel walls jagged like cliffs, and the balconies

hanging out like tongues sticking out of pouty windows. Hitler considered it the most disgusting and imperfect work of architecture ever built, and the size of the structure overwhelmed him with its immensity. Beside it he felt small and fragile.

The bridge ended at a stairway leading up to the castle's only entrance. The castle seemed deserted to them as they climbed the steps. No light came out through the windows. There wasn't a sound in the air. Everything was dead. Adolf almost bit his tongue off when they got to the top and noticed two people lying on the ground next to an artificial gray hedge.

Dead?

One of the dead snored.

"I can never sleep when he snores," said the other dead man as they approached. 'I can't sleep at the slightest sound, and he can't sleep without snoring. We have to sleep in shifts.«

The guards wore red uniforms with red cone hats and black eye make-up. Upon closer inspection, Adolf realized that the two guards were joined at the waist. They had to be Siamese twins.

"We want to go to the ball," Adolf said to the Siamese guard.

“To the ball?” asked the Siamese guard, as if he had no idea what he was talking about.

"Yes, we have invitations," said Adolf.

The warthog man bent down and handed the invitations to the resting man.

"Invitations?" The guard was getting angry.

He looked at the papers for two seconds and then threw them away.

"I can't let you in," he said.

The sleeping guard snored.

“Why not?” Adolf asked. "Are we improperly dressed?"

"No," said the guard. "You were born improperly."

"What do you mean?" asked Adolf.

"Their bodies are separated!" he said. "It's rude." The sleeping guard snored.

"Only conjoined twins are admitted to the palace," said the awake guard. "If you want to go to the ball, you have to be connected."

“Connected?” asked Adolf. "Bonded together!" Adolf clenched his fist. "Siamese twins are an abomination!"

"I have orders to kill anyone who speaks ill of Siamese twins," said the guard. "The goddesses are Siamese twins, you know."

"Goddesses?"

"The Empress and her sister," said the guard. "The Wives of the Golden Eel."

"Siamese twins can't be goddesses!" said Hitler.

"You have three choices," said the dormant guardian. "You can blaspheme again and be executed on the spot, you can turn back and never come back, or you can go through the connector and then to the ball."

Oddly enough, Adolf was beginning to feel intimidated by the guard.

"Interconnects?"

"He's right over there," said the guard, pointing to three alcoves to the left of the entrance. 'He makes two separate ones joined. You will not be held in the same respect as natural associates, but you will be permitted to enter _____burg.”

"You mean I need to physically bond with this *creature* ?" asked Adolf, pointing at the warthog man.

The guard nodded, banging his head on the ground. "Your dates need to connect, too."

"My body is the epitome of perfection," said Mr. Warthog. "I will never combine my flesh with that of a mutant!"

'It's the only way you can enter the castle and go to the ball. Connect or leave, I don't care what you do. Just do it quickly. I find separation disgusting and offensive.«

Both Mr. Hitler and Mr. Warthog's jaws dropped at the man's grotesque notion.

How can someone so disgusting and obnoxious think exactly the same thing about someone as perfectly beautiful as I am, both Mr. Warthog and Adolf Hitler thought to themselves.

Mr. Hitler pig

The next moment Hitler was already attached to the side of the sweaty warthog man and stepped through the entrance into the castle. Because he was so much taller than Adolf, Mr. Warthog had to crouch to get Adolf's feet to even touch the ground. Their dates had linked up as well, following close behind them.

Black and weeping walls awaited them in the castle. Stuffed insects the size of bears lined the corridor like exhibits in a museum. There were stuffed bugs, stuffed earwigs, and lots of stuffed dragonflies. Further down the corridor, the insect statues looked more like works of art. Parts of them had been collaged together to form grotesque new insects. There were centipede statues with butterfly wings and spider legs. There was

Cockroach statues with scorpion tails and ladybug breastplates.

The castle seemed incredibly quiet and deserted. It looked as if no one had walked down this corridor for years.

"He's around here somewhere," said Mr. Warthog. "I can feel it."

"Yes," said Herr Hitler. “This place exudes sheer imperfection. He must be the source of this city's imperfection. I have no doubt that the imperfect man is around here somewhere. He might even be behind everything in this town.”

Their voices echoed through the dusty corridors. There were no other sounds apart from the rustling of the faded red carpet beneath their feet.

"Shall we go to the ball or should we look around?" Mr. Warthog asked.

"I assume most of the people in the castle will be at the ball," said Adolf. "If the imperfect man is a guest, we will find him there."

"But if he's been kidnapped off the street, he's probably being held somewhere else," Mr. Warthog said.

"We should look around."

The corridor ended and branched off in four different directions. Two of these turned out to be very narrow diagonal corridors that they could only fit through if the warthog man sucked in his stomach and they walked sideways. They chose the widest corridor to their right, lined with smaller stuffed insects mounted like fish on plaques. There were stuffed termites, maggots, ants, crickets, fruit flies and crab spiders.

At the end of the corridor a small hatch awaited them, opening onto a narrow spiral staircase down into the darkness.

"We shouldn't go down there," young Adolf said to the stairs. 'The stairway can't lead anywhere that's comfortable. We must go back and try another direction."

"But it could lead to a dungeon where the imperfect man is being held captive," said Mr. Warthog.

"Possibly," said Herr Hitler. "But it could also lead to an uncomfortable place where the imperfect man is not held captive. It could even lead to a cesspool."

After that, young Adolf had no more say in the matter, as the warthog man went down the stairs and simply took the much smaller man with him. The women followed.

At the foot of the black stairs they reached a cesspool. Crystal chandeliers on the ceiling provided sparse lighting. The smell was penetrating and rich, but more like honey than excrement. They followed sideways a narrow wooden walkway that ran along the river of black mud. Young Adolf stared down at the mud, constantly afraid they might fall in.

"I really didn't want to end up in a place like that," said Herr Hitler.

"Yes, but it's likely that there's a dungeon in just such a place," said Mister Warthog.

"Yes, but it's likely we'll be too disgusting to go to the ball once we get that stench."

'Yes, but we're alone down here. We can search this area undisturbed."

"Yes, but I don't like it down here," said Herr Hitler. 'Look at the chandeliers. What are such beautiful objects doing in a place like this? You don't belong here."

The warthog nearly dumped her in the mud as he leaned forward to get a better look. "You're quite nice."

After carefully following the dimly lit sewer for a few minutes, they listened softly
ballroom music. Whispers of voices and moving violin music echoed through the tunnels.

"The ball must be directly above us," said Herr Hitler.

" I do n't think so," said Herr Warthog . "Look ahead."

At the end of the tunnel, Hitler discovered a large portal from which the music seemed to be coming. The portal was grandiosely decorated with fittings of gold and emeralds. It wasn't what you would normally find in a sewer.

“Is this the way to the ball?” Adolf asked. "Why would they make such a grandiose entrance for such a grandiose event in such a cesspool?"

"Probably some of the guests are coming from the sewer," said the warthog man. Adolf shuddered.

The joined couples arrived at the portal but were reluctant to enter. The uniformed officers struggled to rub the sewer stench from their clothing. The women wagged their rumps and nodded with excitement.

"We'll mingle and look for the imperfect man," Mr. Warthog said. "If he's not here, we'll sneak into the more private areas of the castle."

Adolf nodded.

They opened the large doors to the ballroom. No sooner had they gone through than the music and the general hubbub of voices stopped.

Mr Aal

Dead silence reigned in the largely empty ballroom. The room was so white that Hitler was blinded by it. There were white porcelain walls, white tile floors, white cobweb hangings. The only things not white were the few guests in the room and the huge painting, several stories high, that showed a golden eel.

Three groups of connected couples stood on the dance floor and twirled in circles like a windmill. Each mated male couple danced with a mated female couple. There was no music to dance to, but they danced as passionately as if there were any. They moved as if dancing to the violin music playing in the sewer, but here the tapping of their feet made the only sounds.

Hitler found them surprisingly elegant for mutants. The pairs were yellow wasp males and green horned reptilian females, but their clothing seemed rich and their movements calculated and majestic.

Hitler shook his head to himself. *No, they're just mutants. They are a caricature of true elegance.*

It wasn't perfectly still in the room. An electrical hum and gurgling bubbling could be heard in the background. Then Hitler realized it. The gigantic eel painting on the other side of the ballroom was not a painting at all, but a massive aquarium in which a monstrous eel was swimming. The eel was probably only the size of an ordinary river eel, but since Hitler was little larger than a tiny insect, the eel struck him as enormous as a god. Hitler slowly understood why people in the underworld worshiped the eel as their god.

There was no way for her to mingle with people at this ball. There were so few guests, so generously distributed, that they would have been immediately noticeable. There were only two other couples outside the dance floor, one female and one male. The two connected men had already made their way to Adolf and the warthog man.

In an effort to keep a low profile, Hitler and the warthog man turned to their dates, pretending to be deep in conversation that they did not wish to be interrupted. However, their pursuers ignored this hint.

"Hello again," one of the men said as they joined them. They were Mr. Eyebrows, the noseless high priest, and Mr. Song, the owner of the pet shop. They had recently been bandaged together, and wore costly jeweled robes like those of kings.

"It's good that you've finally come," said Mr. Eyebrows.

He put his arm around Adolf.

"I was expected?" Herr Hitler asked.

"You're the guest of honor," said Mr. Eyebrows.

"I don't know anything about that," said Herr Hitler.

"Where did it come from," said Mr. Eyebrows. "You have just been chosen by the goddess to be her guest of honor."

Mr. Eyebrows pointed to one of the women standing across the dance floor by the eel aquarium. Then he realized that the two women weren't connected.

"I thought the goddess was connected?" said Adolf.

"Yes," said the warthog man. "They said everyone had to be connected to match her."

"Oh yes," said Mr. Eyebrows. 'You've been connected too, but were a few days ago

Cut. They're much happier now that they're apart."

"But I thought being separated was offensive?" asked Adolf.

'Oh, that's it too,' said Herr Lied. "It definitely is."

Hitler wondered why the empress was held in such high esteem while all other women were considered pets. Even Mr. Song and Mr. Eyebrows, who previously seemed to have despised women, were extremely respectful of her. *Are gender roles distributed differently in _____burg than in _____town? That doesn't make any sense at all.*

"But enough of that," said Mr. Eyebrows. "Come, as guest of honor, you must meet the Golden Eel and his wife."

The joined Mr. Augenbrauenlied led the joined Mr. Hitler pig to the big eel aquarium. Young Adolf noticed that the eel wasn't actually golden at all. He wore scaly plates of gold. The closer Hitler got to the eel, the more ordinary it seemed to him. He didn't strike him as a brilliant godlike being at all. Nothing but an ordinary eel, albeit many times larger. His eyes stared into space.

"Does it speak?" asked Young Adolf.

"Never address him with es," said Herr Lied.

“Does he speak?” asked Young Adolf.

"Not with us," said Mr. Eyebrows. "Only the goddess can speak to the golden eel."

"Has anyone seen the eel doing anything other than swimming around in the water tank?" asked Young Adolf.

'Yes, the goddess tells of many great deeds he did in the past. The Golden Eel is brilliant and responsible for all the wonders of our world.«

"But have you, or anyone you know besides the goddess, ever seen the golden eel doing anything other than swimming around in the aquarium?" asked Young Adolf.

Mr. Eyebrows looked at Mr. Song. Mr. Song shrugged.

"No," said Mr. Eyebrows. “We are not allowed to handle the golden eel. Only the goddess knows of his secret activities.”

"And that doesn't strike you as unusual?" asked Young Adolf.

"As the saying goes, the ways of the golden eel are unfathomable," said Mr. Eyebrows.

Mrs. Eel

The goddess and her sister stood under the golden eel's aquarium and stared up at the monstrous creature. Both women had their heads completely wrapped in bandages. One wore a green plaid skirt, the other a red plaid skirt. Apart from the skirts, the women were naked and presented their bare breasts to the giant eel while rubbing themselves with oil.

The women had been joined together at the sides of their heads. Since their separation, their heads had been bandaged like mummies, and there were dark red spots in the bandages on the sides where blood was seeping through. Aside from the mummy faces, the women made a human impression on Adolf. Not just human, they were almost attractive. Their bodies seemed perfectly acceptable to him. Her breasts were almost three times the size of his perfect wife's.

Adolf changed his mind when Mr. Eyebrows brought them closer to the women. They were missing limbs. The one in the red skirt had lost a hand and half a foot. The one in green was missing an arm to the shoulder. And between her legs, dozens of thin, wriggling tentacles protruded from beneath her skirts. Not the tentacles of a squid, but those of a jellyfish or sea anemone. They grew out of the crotch like long, shuddering pubic hair.

These women are not human, they are creatures like the others.

Adolf felt himself nauseous as he realized that the oil they were rubbing themselves with was actually a clear jelly they made from their

milking pubic tentacles. The jelly smelled like black olives.

"Your Highness," Mr. Eyebrows said to the women. "Here are some people who would like to meet you."

The two women turned to Adolf and his companion. Although their eyes were under the bandages, it seemed they could see through them.

"Ah, yes, Herr Adolf Hitler," said a whispering female voice.

The voice didn't seem to come from the women, but from somewhere behind them. Since their mouths were hidden behind the bandages, Adolf could not tell whether any of them had actually spoken.

"I'm not really Adolf Hitler," said young Adolf Hitler. 'I just don't know my name. My memory is gone. All I know is that I'm on a mission.«

The two women stared at Adolf for a long time. They shifted their oiled bellies from side to side, breathing deeply through the gauze.

“I'm on a mission to find an imperfect man. I think he's in this castle somewhere. Perhaps you could help me?'

The two women continued to stare at him. The sounds of her breathing grew hoarse and louder, panting at him through the fabric. The one in the red skirt stroked her oily thigh.

"It's a matter of national security," said young Adolf.

The women huffed and squirmed. "Imperfect?" said a harsh, whispered one female voice. "In..." she paused to take a deep breath, "... in what way?"

"I, uh..." Adolf wiped the sweat from his forehead. He didn't know which woman was speaking, so he kept his eyes on the space between them as he answered. "I do not know exactly."

The women bowed their heads questioningly. He looked at the warthog man for answers, but his bonded brother seemed lost in thought.

"I can't remember his face, but it's imperfect," Adolf said after he'd regained his composure. "It's like a plague and I'm here..."

The rough voice cut him off. "Are you against imperfection?"

Adolf hesitated. “Y...yes. I believe perfection is all that is good and imperfection is all that is evil.«

"Yes," said the voice, hissing like a snake. Then Adolf realized it was the woman in the red skirt who was talking to him. Her head had moved when the voice last spoke.

Is that so? Yes, it must be so. The woman in the red skirt must be the goddess, the wife of the golden eel.

"I agree," said Mrs. Aal. “The imperfection must be erased. Only the perfect should be allowed to live.”

"Yes," said Herr Hitler. "My mission is to eliminate the last imperfect male so I can bring perfection to the human gene pool."

"I'm on a mission too, Herr Hitler," whispered Frau Aal. "My mission is similar."

The red-coated woman took a step toward Adolf and the warthog man, letting their strong black olive odor fill their nostrils.

"Come with me," she said. "I want to show you my progress."

She pushed the half-naked women aside as if opening a door and slowly walked across the dance floor

a hole in the middle of the room. They moved sluggishly and in a springy way that made it look like they were walking underwater.

"You must have impressed her," said Mr. Eyebrows. "As far as I know, she hasn't shown anyone her work before."

"If your work is about *perfection* ," Herr Hitler said, "then that's understandable. I'm probably the *most perfect* specimen of a human she's ever seen."

"Good luck," wished Herr Lied.

Hitler and the warthog man waved them goodbye and followed the goddess and her sister. Their linked dates fell behind them, scowling at the floor as if they'd just been dumped in favor of the big-breasted, mummy-faced women.

There was a black circle in the center of the ballroom. Herr Hitlerschwein dodged the Siamese dancers and arrived in the middle, where the two half-naked women were waiting for them. The silent dancers undeterred turned their windmills.

"Ready?" Mrs. Aal asked in her whispery voice.

Adolf nodded.

Then the black circle started moving down like an elevator.

Lord master race

They descended into an underground world miles below the ballroom. It was dark, thick fog surrounded them. They descended on a smoke-filled industrial wasteland. From far below came the sound of pounding, grinding machines.

There were no railings in the elevator, so Adolf huddled very close to the women to reduce the risk of falling out. He stood so close to Ms. Aal that he could feel the warmth radiating from her olive-oiled body. He could feel her jellyfish tentacles wrapping around his legs. But she didn't say anything, just stared at him eyelessly and gasped through her bandages.

The closer they got to the ground, the louder the machines became. Adolf heard pounding, crunching, buzzing, screeching, screaming. Like something alive down there. Like thousands of mechanical dinosaurs tearing each other to pieces. The volume of the machines strained his ears. Hitler crouched in the center of the platform.

The sight of the machines burst into his perception and Adolf felt as if he were being attacked. There were thousands of massive machine creatures, all screaming and thrashing. Adolf pressed himself against Frau Aal, unperturbed by the fact that she was bare-chested and a goddess. The machines didn't remind him of mechanical dinosaurs, more like mechanical dinosaur-sized bugs and centipedes. As they charged at each other, Adolf figured they must have some purpose. They may have been generators or construction machinery. The technology was beyond Adolf's comprehension.

The platform descended further down, below the industrial level and into a lower complex. They passed a level of factory workers in orange overalls, then a refrigerated level filled with dozens of dead giant fish, finally a level of empty black prison cells.

Adolf realized he was still clinging to Frau Aal's naked body. He pulled away from her to find that his uniform was now soaked with her olive oil sweat. He looked in her direction. She was still staring at him.

If these primitive people think she's a goddess, even though it's absurd to think such a creature is a goddess, she can have me executed for touching her like that.

"Excuse me," said Young Adolf to the goddess. "I beg your pardon." It was difficult for him to sound sincere.

“What for?” asked Frau Aal.

They passed a level with small makeshift shacks in which six red-checkered beds stood close together. A cow-headed man crouched on one and stared at Adolf while licking a black leather shoe.

"For touching you in this way," said Young Adolf. "I know that's improper."

"Men are silly creatures," whispered Mrs. Aal. "They are like children."

'You talk as if men are worth less than women?' 'Of course they are. Women are men in everyone far superior."

"Then why aren't women more than pets for the men here?" asked Young Adolf. "Why are women considered third-class citizens?"

"Men are easy to control," said Mrs. Aal. "I'm only worried about the women."

They passed a level with an abandoned children's playground.

“I keep their social status the same as that of animals,” continued Ms. Aal, “to keep them from using their brains. Since then I do not have problems anymore."

They passed another level with a massive miniature city full of microscopic people, even 100 times smaller than Adolf in his shrunken state. A bustling metropolis with millions of these microscopic beings. On her way down, Mrs. Aal rubbed her index finger along the side of one of these miniature skyscrapers. When her finger reached street level, she pinned it to the sidewalk, crushing a miniature businessman on his way to work. She wiped his bloody remains on the side of her stomach and hip.

Eventually they arrived at a sterile laboratory complex and the platform came to a halt.

"Here," Mrs. Aal whispered hoarsely, and left the platform. The others followed her down a corridor to one big red door. She opened a drawer by the door and put her hand in a green broth. It had to be some sort of ID check. The door buzzed and swung open. The goddess wiped her sticky hand on the side of her stomach and waist until her skin absorbed the broth.

They entered what Adolf assumed was a giant morgue. There were dozens of rows of tables with bodies on them. Several hundred bodies. Dead mutant creatures.

"I think you'll be impressed with my work so far," said Mrs. Aal. “I want a race of

of utmost beauty and perfection. I want to create a master race."

She led them along a row of tables.

"I had people kidnapped off the streets and used them for my research," she continued. "I take the best genes from people and implant them in my patterns."

Adolf smirked in disgust at the creatures around him. Ghastly mutants worse than the creatures of _____town.

"That's why we came," said Herr Warthog. “We believe the man we're looking for was kidnapped off the street and brought here. Did you fetch him?'

"Possibly," said Mrs. Aal. »I need a lot of people for my research.«

Adolf saw a mutant stirring on one of the tables he passed. He wondered if others present here were still alive.

"Would he be dead if they took him?" Mr. Warthog asked.

"Possibly," said Mrs. Aal. "A lot of people die doing my research."

She led them across the room to another door and turned to face them. Her sister leaned her back against the wall.

"I have chosen you to be the first to examine my new creation," said Mrs. Aal. “Apart from my sister I have never met anyone who cares about perfection. Throughout our lives we are told that perfection is impossible. That everything is imperfect.«

"Nonsense," said Herr Warthog.

"Complete nonsense," agreed Herr Hitler. "Perfection is the only thing to strive for."

"I agree with you," said Mrs. Aal. 'While I'm not particularly fond of you as men, I'm very fond of your ideals. So I'll reward you with a glimpse of perfection."

She opened the door and let them in.

"There it is," said Mrs. Aal. "The most perfect being you will ever see."

When Adolf entered, he faced a large biotope surrounded by cage bars. Inside was a creature. Her skin was gray and armored. She had bat wings, eyes like an eagle's, teeth like a shark's, and claws of metal. Part insect, part reptile, part demon. The most hideous monster Adolf had ever seen.

"What do you think of that?" Mrs Aal asked.

Both Adolf and the warthog seemed paralyzed with disgust. The creature was wetting. It gave off an odor reminiscent of rotten chicken. "Well?" Mrs. Aal asked. "Isn't he great?"

The creature licked its eyes with a long frog tongue.

"This is..." began Adolf, "this is the most hideous, imperfect creature I have ever seen."

Adolf had said the wrong thing. Although the bandages completely covered the goddess' face, he could see the anger building underneath.

"Imperfect?" Mrs. Aal asked. "What do you know of perfection, you pathetic man?"

"What do I know about perfection?" said Young Adolf, raising his voice. »I am the living embodiment of perfection! There have never been nobler genes than mine and those of my people!«

"She! Perfect?" yelled-whispered Mrs. Aal. "You think you are superior to my creation?"

"Yes, I'm obviously far superior to her," said Herr Hitler.

"Can you hear a conversation from 100 kilometers away?" asked Ms. Aal.

Young Adolf raised his eyebrows in confusion.

"What?"

"Do you have ears good enough to hear other living beings from a hundred kilometers away?" Then she pointed to her beast. “Because he can. Can you fly or breathe underwater?”

"No," said Adolf.

"He does," she said. “He also has claws that can cut through steel. He can read a novel from 50 meters away, even in the dark. He can run up to 150 kilometers per hour. He is stronger than ten bears. Its skin is almost impenetrable. He hardly needs food and sleep. He is immune to all known diseases and can live over 500 years. He's far superior to you."

"It may be that he is physically superior to me," said Young Adolf. 'But that's a machine, too. There are certainly vehicles that can fly faster than this creature. There are certainly lasers that cut steel with even greater ease. But these are just tools. Your creation is just a tool. I'll happily admit that you've created a very powerful tool, but it's still just a tool. It doesn't have a superior mind."

Mrs. Aal giggled. “His brain is his strongest trait. His memory is so good that he has never forgotten anything and will never forget anything. His math and analytical skills are perfect. He can learn any language in no time. He can think and plan faster than any other living being ever born. His brain is a super brain. It is my greatest achievement.«

"But it sure is like a computer," said Adolf. »Computers are just tools. His brain is nothing but an organic supercomputer. He never has the creative and artistic talent that I have.«

'He has artistic talent,' said Mrs Aal, 'only it is far more developed than anything you could ever comprehend. Each artistic attempt has led to a new masterpiece. What took the greatest artists, writers and musicians a lifetime to do, he creates in half an afternoon.«

"But where is his passion and emotional depth?" Young Adolf pointed out. “It doesn't have the ability to feel like I do. It doesn't have the soul. Your creature may be superior in body and mind, but I have the superior soul. And that alone really counts.«

"A superior soul?" Mrs. Aal asked. 'What's that even supposed to mean? How can you measure the worth of a soul?”

"If you don't know that, your creation is obviously lacking in soul," said Young Adolf.

"There is no evidence that souls even exist," said Mrs. Aal.

"Perhaps you are just too inferior to understand the complexity of the human soul," said Young Adolf. “No, your creature is nothing compared to me. Just look at him. He's disgusting. My race, we are pure beauty. We are the definition of perfection.«

"No, you're not!" exclaimed Mrs. Aal. “You're outclassed. They are ugly. My creation is the most beautiful thing there is. Its beauty is its qualitatively most important quality. It is his most perfect quality."

"He's pathetic and ugly," insisted Young Adolf. “You only think he's perfectly beautiful because

Your brain is flawed. You don't understand true perfection the way I do."

The goddess slapped Adolf in the face.

With that last remark, he had finally crossed the line. The warthog man covered Hitler's mouth so he couldn't say anything more.

"Very well," said Mrs. Aal. "We'll see how your superior soul fights against my superior nature."

Mr. Imperfect

Next, Adolf found himself in a large arena, still bonded to the warthog man, who was shaking and sweating his uniform.

Thousands of people sat in the stadium. The lowest places were occupied by the inhabitants of _____stadt. He spotted Elsie with his mutant children in the crowd, no longer connected. She waved at him nervously. He saw Mr. Eyebrows and Mr. Song. He saw the Siamese guards he encountered outside _____burg was. He even saw Mrs. Adrett sitting very calmly in her racing car armor on Mr. Augenbrauen's lap.

Higher up in the stands sat Mr. Mustache and the other cockroach people from the upper world. Above them, Adolf saw a dozen giants gathered around the Colosseum. Then there was Herr Rad, hovering over the stadium with a crooked grin on his face. And the host wasn't missing either. He distributed beer to the other giants.

In the middle of the arena, Adolf faced Frau Aal's creature. She waited patiently, wagging a black spiked tail. Behind the creature swam its god, the Golden Eel, in a huge tank of water. The goddess and her sister stood at his side.

"It's hopeless," said Mr. Warthog. "The beast will tear us to pieces."

"I will not allow myself to be killed by such an imperfect creature," Herr Hitler said.

"You are an imperfect creature yourself," said Mr. Warthog.

"I am the definition of perfection," Herr Hitler said.

"You really aren't," said Herr Warthog.

Adolf raised his fist at the warthog man. He hadn't noticed that Mrs. Aal had given the signal for the fight to begin. It ended before Adolf knew what had actually happened.

"What do you know?" Adolf yelled at the warthog man as his torso was sliced in two.

Adolf watched as the warthog man ran off with part of his torso, which also had one of his legs and one of his arms attached. His blood spattered all over the arena floor. He didn't realize that the mutant creature had practically cut him in two until after he fell.

Bleeding to death, Adolf watched as the creature pursued the warthog man and cut off his head. She shredded his corpulent body, tearing shreds of flesh out of him and gulping down his entrails.

"Horrible," Adolf murmured as he watched the beast do it. "Imperfect and hideous."

Elsie jumped from the stadium stands into the arena and ran to him. She picked up his half body and cradled him in her arms.

"No, you can't leave me," she cried. "I was just beginning to feel human again."

Adolf coughed up some blood on her.

"I can't die," he said. "I need to get the other half of my body back from the warthog man so I can sew myself back together, so I can kill that hideous creature, so I can prove to the empress that I'm a perfect being, so she can help me kill the imperfect man find it so I can eliminate him and go home a national hero so I can..."

Adolf rolled his eyes and his body went limp.

"No," called Elsie. "Stay with me. you can't go You have to stay.«

Adolf felt his soul slip out of his body. The soul slowly sank into the ground.

Elsie's spirit hand reached through him and caught his soul beneath the surface of the earth.

"You can't go," she repeated. 'You must stay with me. I don't want to be alone again."

His soul sank deeper. She tried to pull it out, but her fingers slipped off him.

"I don't care if you're just a ghost," she cried. “We can just pretend we're alive. We can pretend forever.”

"You are an abomination," announced Young Adolf's soul underground. "You shouldn't even exist."

He slipped out of her hands and sank deeper into the earth. She was crying far too loud to hear his comment.

Apparently for several days, Adolf's soul floated downwards through rocks and minerals. He felt dazed and peaceful. He had died and sunk into this eternal slumber. But he had not yet completed his mission.

As soon as he regained consciousness, Adolf felt himself falling out of the rock into a hollow space. He floated through air. The world around him had turned pink and white. He rolled over and looked down. Below him was a cartoon world full of dancing dinner plates and singing candlesticks. There were candy houses and fields of bright orange grass.

When he hit the ground, he felt no pain. He felt nothing at all. His eyes blinked between unconscious and awake. He was still stuck in a dazed twilight state after actual life, his surroundings nothing but a strange illusion.

Three of the inhabitants of this garish cartoon world came to see if Adolf was all right: a blue female gravy boat walking on stubby little legs, a brown suitcase with a thin mustache, and an acoustic guitar with long, shaggy hair.

“Are you all right?” asked the acoustic guitar. "You've fallen pretty low."

Hitler decided to indulge his hallucinations. He had nothing better to do.

"I feel great," said Adolf. "Nothing happened to me."

"That's great," said the gravy boat. "It would have been terrible if you had hurt yourself."

"I feel great," Adolf said, his head bobbing. "For real."

"What are you doing down here, Max?" the suitcase asked. "I'm on a mission," said Adolf. 'Wait a minute... how did you just call me?”

"Max," said the suitcase. "That's your name, isn't it?" "No," he said. 'My name is Adol... I don't know how I am name is."

"You've lost your memory, haven't you?" asked the acoustic guitar.

"Yes," said Adolf.

"You mentioned a mission," said the gravy boat. “Tell us about your mission. Maybe that will jog your memory.”

"My mission is to find the last imperfect man," Adolf said. "Have you seen him?"

"Imperfect?" the suitcase asked. "In what way?"

"I don't know exactly," said Adolf. “I can't remember his face, but he's imperfect. It is a plague and I am here to rid society of it.”

"Sounds awful," said the acoustic guitar.

"I have a picture of him in my briefcase," said Adolf. "If only I could find my briefcase, I would know the man I'm looking for."

"Am I your briefcase?" the suitcase asked.

“What?” Adolf asked.

Adolf's field of vision cleared. His hallucination faded away and reality poured in. But the cartoon characters were not part of the hallucination, they were real. Except they didn't look like cartoon characters anymore. They looked like a real guitar, a real gravy boat, and a real briefcase.

briefcase?

Adolf suddenly realized that the brown suitcase wasn't a suitcase at all, but a briefcase. He couldn't quite remember what his briefcase looked like, but for some reason something clicked in his head that this living creature was actually his briefcase.

"Let me have a look," Adolf said.

He picked up the briefcase and unbolted the latches.

"Wait!" the briefcase called. "Don't open me!"

When Adolf opened it, the briefcase screamed in pain as its insides fell to the floor.

"They killed him," cried the acoustic guitar.

"Run away!" shouted the gravy boat.

Then they ran away.

The briefcase lay limp and lifeless. Adolf searched her innards, which were really just papers and notebooks.

This is her, he thought. *This is my briefcase. I finally found her.*

He found the file of the man he was looking for. The Imperfect Man's Files. He pulled out the photo and studied it carefully.

"Yes, that's him," said Adolf.

The picture showed a man who looked almost identical to Hitler. He had the same hair. Same skin color. Same eye color. Same size. Very similar facial features. There was only one difference between them. The man's earlobes were attached to his face instead of hanging freely.

"What a terrible genetic flaw," Adolf said. He put the papers back in his briefcase and
stood up.

"I can't give up now," Adolf said. »This disease in the human gene pool must be stopped.«

He strode through this new world of objects brought to life and pink-furred landscapes. He wiped his soul clean as he realized he was no longer cut in two. He was back in his uniform, now perfectly ironed and spotless.

"I must now find a way to get out of here," said young Adolf Hitler, "so that I can return to _____stadt, so that I can have possession of
one of my mutant children like the ghost girl did, so I can become human again, so I can work on getting more of my memories back, so I can track down the imperfect man, so I can wipe him out, so I can go after _____ castle return
and find a way to get back to my normal size, so that I can return to my perfect world, so that I can become a national hero, so that I can live in peace and harmony and *perfection for all eternity* ."

Forever and ever.

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imprint

The original American edition *Adolf in Wonderland*
was published by Eraserhead Press in 2007.

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Editing: Alexander Rösch

Cover photo: Ed Mironiuk

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978-3-86552-279-5

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